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The New Records

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A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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A LOOK AT the price structure of LP records, in view of the recent price reductions, is most interesting and revealing. Those companies who have followed RCA Victor's lead in lowering their prices have made public announcements to that effect; some have gone all out to meet the competition, while others—notably Columbia—have done so more or less half-heartedly. Columbia (and some others) has reduced *most* of its 12-inch ML-4000 series to \$3.98; but it lists others at \$4.98, still others at \$5.95, and even a few at \$6.95. This philosophy has come to be known in the trade as "records are not beans," following Columbia's ads with those words as a heading. This implies that records are not homogeneous, that one record is not necessarily worth as much as another. With this we agree; but Columbia should have different numerical series for each price category. It has placed the dealer in an embarrassing position: ML-4902, ML-4930 and ML-4240 all look alike on a sales slip; yet the first is \$4.98, the second \$3.98, and the last \$6.95!

Then there are some companies who have not reduced their list prices, but rather have made them fictitious, in that few dealers actually sell the records at the advertised price. Westminster, Vox and Haydn Society are examples of this; most shops (including that of the publisher) sell Voxes at \$3.98 and Haydn Society at \$2.99. Westminster, now engaged in a "5th Anniversary Sale," has also pegged its 12" LP's at \$2.99. We do not agree with this philosophy of making it appear that the dealer is giving discounts; the advertised price should be the going price. However, publications (like TNR) must necessarily show these makes at \$5.95, since this is the "official" price.

In view of Mercury's recent rise from \$3.98 to \$4.98 and the rumors that London prices

may jump upwards, we feel it not inadvisable to repeat our suggestion of last month: now is the best time we can foresee to purchase LP records; prices can go no other way but up.

* * *

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy of THE NEW RECORDS, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this practice beyond this month, so if you have not as yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning March 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Franck: Symphony in D minor. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4939) \$3.98.

Columbia was wise to issue a new recording of the popular Franck *Symphony* by Ormandy and the Philadelphians, for their previous LP was from "78" days and not worthy of today's standards of reproduction. Furthermore, the previous performance dated from days when Ormandy interpretations, however correct and accurate, were often inclined to be rather dry and unimaginative. The present disc, therefore, corrects a number of things, for it gives us the glorious

tone of the orchestra in superlative reproduction, and it gives us an even better reading of the work. The distinctive tone of this orchestra finds a perfect vehicle in richly scored works such as the Franck *Symphony*, and since the early days of Stokowski's reign with this group, it has had no peers in producing the most marvelous orchestral tone to be heard in a performance of this symphony. We would not be surprised to find 90% of all the LP's of this work sold in the next several years to be the present disc.

As there are some other LP's in the catalogs of the Franck *Symphony* of recent vintage, including a few which found high praise from these quarters, we will discuss them too. A few will argue that Ormandy's version is inclined to be a "larger than life" performance—if it is, this is one work that can stand it without suffering. Rodzinski (*WEST-WL-5311) gives us a truly romantic and rather delightfully overblown reading, which we think must defer to Ormandy. Paray offers a reading somewhat different from all the others, and those who want a fresh slant on the work are referred to that disc, for it is excellent in all respects (*ME-MG-50023). And a recent disc conducted by Furtwängler offered one of the most carefully considered and lofty readings of the music (*L-LL-967), one of the most elegant and best organized readings of the work you are likely to hear. But for orchestral lushness and a rich romantic reading, Ormandy has the best of them all and should have no trouble holding that position for a long time.

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67.

One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Fidelio—Overture.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-9) \$4.98.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21. One side, and **Beethoven: Egmont Overture, Op. 84.** And **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35097TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35097) \$4.98.

Beethoven: (6) Overtures. Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5335) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Creatures of Prometheus*, Op. 43; *Ruins of Athens*, Op. 113; *Coriolan*, Op. 62; *Namensfeier*, Op. 115; *Consecration of the House*, Op. 124; *King Stephen*, Op. 117.

Looking back a decade or two ago, in what seems to be "the old 78 days," one of the conversation pieces among collectors of orchestra records was invariably the Furtwängler recording of the Beethoven *Fifth* (and also his recording of the Tchaikovsky "Pathétique"). Those who heard the old 78 version of the *Fifth* always marvelled at the reading, although most classed it as something freakish, or more politely, very individual. Some of the more honest ones let down their hair and admitted it thrilled them to the marrow of their bones, as indeed it did most folks.

That is just about the way it will be with this new version, in which, using the Vienna Philharmonic instead of the Berlin Philharmonic, Furtwängler directs a performance in many ways a duplicate, and generally speaking a very similar reading, to the older version. It is an unhurried, meticulous, scrupulously played performance, cast in a huge mold few other conductors would dare attempt. This is hewn from the same rock as the "Eroica," and if you feel the *Fifth* is all turmoil, storm, stress, and apocalyptic fury, this version is not your dish. But if you love to hear the last drop wrung out of every phrase and every phrase more magnificent than the last one, this reading will make your pulse pound. HMV reproduction matches Furtwängler's conception of the work; it is recorded at an extraordinarily high level—but it is sweet as a nut, a rather remarkable feat. It is also very close-to and reveals extraneous noises here and there. To us, this is the last word in Beethoven *Fifths*, and we have a high admiration for the conductor who can create such a performance. The *Fidelio Overture* is superb.

The Angel record offers a sterling reading of the Beethoven *First*, well recorded, and two of the master's best known overtures in rather spacious readings. This disc can be highly recommended for those wishing this material; it is certainly a good coupling.

The six overtures on the Westminster disc present one thoroughly familiar work and five lesser heard ones. This is a most interesting disc for Beethoven devotees, for while none of these works appears for the first time, this is the first time such a collection has appeared on one disc, and the first time a couple of the overtures have been recorded by a well known conductor and orchestra. Scherchen's readings seem to be a product of careful preparation, and he brings an intensity to them that makes a most convincing case for even the least familiar works. The reproduction is good but rather thin and steely in the string department, a price we are always reluctant to pay for clarity.

S.

Le Groupe des Six. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Georges Tzipine. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35117/8-TP) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3515B) \$10.98.

CONTENTS: Introduction spoken by Jean Cocteau; *Overture* (Tailleferre); *Prelude, Fugue and Postlude* (Honegger); *Sécheresses* (with the Chorale Elisabeth Brasseur) (Poulenc); *Le Printemps au Fond de la Mer* (with Denise Duval, soprano) (Durey); *Phèdre* (Symphonic Suite) (Auric); *Symphony No. 2* (Milhaud).

Henri Collet decided, early in 1920, to name a group of friendly young French composers Le groupe des Six, and they turned out to be (at least five of them) composers whose influence was felt in a pronounced manner on contemporary music. In November, 1953, a gala concert in their honor was arranged, and a few days later this music was re-

corded as we hear it on these discs. Angel has supplied a deluxe package, with an eight page booklet (12" x 12") that is full of fascinating information and pictures, although the program notes are on the sketchy side, with texts (of the sung music) missing.

As for the music itself, we have a brilliant collection of new and interesting scores. Germaine Tailleferre, the only woman in the group, is represented by *Overture* (1935), a short, sparkling bit of gayety which serves as a nice curtain raiser for the album. Next is Honegger's *Prelude, Fugue and Postlude* (1931), a work of some substance which has to be heard more than once for full appreciation of its content. The second disc side contains Poulenc's *Sécheresses* (Drought), a secular cantata for mixed chorus and orchestra, composed in 1937 to poems by Edward James. The work is in four parts; it is the first important choral work of a composer who has since won his place as one of the contemporary masters of vocal polyphony. The side finishes with Louis Durey's *Spring at the Bottom of the Sea*, a solo cantata for soprano and orchestra, composed in 1920 to a poem by Jean Cocteau (it takes about 6½ minutes).

The other disc contains Georges Auric's *Phèdre* and Milhaud's *Symphony No. 2*. *Phèdre* is an orchestral suite taken from the full ballet, book and décor by Jean Cocteau, composed in 1950 and, since then, very popular in Paris. It is a work that establishes a sincere mood, music written by a composer who had something important to say—not music composed for an occasion. Milhaud's symphony was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation; it was completed in 1944. It is in five short movements, titled Peaceful, Mysterious, Painful, With Serenity, and Hallelujah. If you like Milhaud, you will love this work; if not, you'd better stick to Beethoven and Brahms and forget about this whole album. The five movements are aptly named, rather evocative of the titles given them; the Hallelujah is a free fugue which brings the work to a garrison finish. Performances, under Georges Tzipine, are uniformly excellent, as is the reproduction. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 3 in D minor ("Wagner Symphony"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1044) \$3.98.

Wagner: Symphony in C. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Pflüger. One and one-half sides, and **Wagner: Polonia Overture.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Adolf Fritz Guhl. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7116) \$3.98.

The Bruckner *Third Symphony* appears in its fourth LP, and the one most persons will prefer; for it is a big, brilliant reproduction of a big, brilliant performance by an orchestra well qualified

to deliver the expanses of the score. Conductor Hans Knappertsbusch, according to the biographical notes on the jacket, likes to achieve great climaxes and powerful rhythms, and he has himself a mighty good time in this tailor-made work for such talents. We must hasten to add that he is not one to dawdle over these pompous measures, for the work progresses and moves on well. We doubt that those who have preceded him in LP versions have any better way with this score. The *Third* has a wonderful scherzo, one of Bruckner's specialties, and it also has those nice, long lines in the slow movement which provide a seemingly endless flow of melody in a great high arch. Brucknerites will want to hear this fine recording; the only bone of contention may be the echo present in the recording—it is the good old Vienna echo, and frankly, we enjoyed it for a change; at least in this work it sounds good.

Wagnerians at last have a chance to hear his symphony, as well as the obscure *Polonia* overture. The overture appears first on this disc, followed by the first movement of the symphony. The overture is purely a pot-boiler, but, we think, a good one. If Suppé is accepted, then Wagner's *Polonia* belongs, too, for parts of it are cut from the same cloth. Not quite as clean and adroit as Suppé, but just as trite. Good summer park music, too; it has been neglected by them. The symphony, time and again, reminded us of Schumann, and we dare say it could pass for a newly discovered lost symphony by that composer. For the work of a nineteen year old lad, this is some symphony, and we wonder why it has not gotten around more; surely the public would receive it warmly. Gerhard Pflüger and the Leipzig Radio Orchestra give us a performance that is magnificent; accurate, crisp, and well polished. Pflüger plays it with tremendous conviction—he must believe in it completely. The reproduction is excellent; this should be a popular disc, for it is a good novelty. S.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Ballet, Op. 71 (complete). Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-237) \$7.96.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. One side, and **Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46.** And **Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 2, Op. 55.** Hamburg Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Hans-Jürgen Walther. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3139) \$3.98.

The only other complete version of the *Nutcracker Ballet* is the one by the Minneapolis Symphony under Antal Dorati (*ME-OL-2-101), a set which won enthusiastic praise in these columns (TNR July '54). It is housed in an attractive album with several pages of notes and art work. The present set has an adequate set of notes, and there is no extra charge for the album. As for the musical content, we still think Dorati and the Mercury en-

gineers, together with the excellence of the Minneapolis Orchestra, keep that set firmly in first place. The reproduction of the present Urania set is mighty good, very brilliant and quite clear. The Mercury set has its Olympian reproduction, which is somewhat smoother and richer in texture than the Urania, and yields a better bass tone. Mercury saw to it that the famous pistol shot, which occurs in the battle scene, comes through with the maximum effect, and by comparison it is more realistic than the Urania.

Over and above matters technical and mechanical, however, we feel that Dorati has a very perceptible edge over Dobrindt when it comes to what meets the ear musically. One need go no further than the overture to become aware of the skill of conductor Dorati in handling orchestral balances and textures. A comparison is most interesting. Continuing on to the next section, Decorating and Lighting the Christmas Tree, we again hear orchestral playing which is fine grained and highly polished. Were the Mercury set not in existence for a direct comparison, we would have to admit Dobrindt and his forces play the work well and provide a definite atmosphere; but when one may choose between the two versions, Dorati is our choice.

The *Nutcracker Suite*, as presented on the MGM disc, is the usual concert suite, which has been recorded about twenty times on LP—any one of which is the equal or better than this plodding, heavy-handed performance. To compare this with the half dozen best versions is to show how really poor this set is. The two *Peer Gynt Suites* coupled on the same record make this a nice collection—if they were better performed. The reproduction is good, but what it reproduces is not worth the trouble. S.

Nielsen: Symphony No. 5, Op. 50. One and one-half sides, and **Nielsen: Maskarade—Overture.** Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1143) \$3.98.

Nielsen: Concerto for Flute and Orchestra. Gilbert Jespersen (flute) with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. One side, and **Nielsen: Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra.** Ib Erikson (clarinet) with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1124) \$3.98.

Nielsen: Maskarade—Overture, Magdalene's Dance Scene, Prelude to Act II, Dance of the Cockerels. Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9156) \$2.98.

As with many other composers, Nielsen had good luck with his fifth symphony. The *Fifth Symphony* was the work which first convinced British listeners

that Nielsen was a master of the first order, hitherto shamefully neglected. Since it was played in 1950 at the Edinburgh Festival, many other works by Nielsen have been heard, a book on the composer has been published in English, and it has at last become clear that he is by no means a "one work" composer. These remarks from the cover notes are continued with some interesting material and observations, and we would like to add here that this British awakening resulted in a series of Nielsen recordings which are causing a similar American reaction, although we doubt that Nielsen is getting much notice in our concert halls.

The *Fifth Symphony*, to get back to it, is a large work cast in two movements. While the symphony has no title and is not program music, it is descriptive to the extent that it depicts man's urge to control both himself and his environment. The long first movement seems to explore the world in all its aspects, noble and base, and the conflicts brought to the awakening mind. The second movement comes to terms with these conflicts by constructive action, an outburst of tremendous energy, culminating in a blaze of human power. There is music of mystery, music that is grim, stark, dismal, and passages of light and warmth, passages all through the first movement that seem to be compiling a picture whose composite effect will offer many paths for the second movement. And the second movement does indeed take hold at once of the opportunities in a display of power that has an impressive impact. Thomas Jensen, co-conductor of the admirable Danish State Radio Orchestra, presents a magnificent reading of this great work, which London has reproduced with opulence and power.

Space does not permit a detailed description of the two Nielsen concertos, written for specific players of these instruments, one of whom performs here (Gilbert Jespersen). They are personality portraits as well as idiomatic writings for the instruments, and rather fascinating compositions to hear. Performances and recording are of the best quality.

The little 10" LP of four excerpts from the comic opera *Maskarade* (which is the obvious way it should always be spelled) is a gem which lovers of light and frothy music will not want to miss. The overture is a joyous affair, scintillating and humorous, with a message that is clear and direct, as well as masterfully penned. The reproduction of this disc is positively stunning, to be admired for its richness as much as for its brilliance. S.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 ("Titan"). Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-SL-218) \$5.95.

There is a lot of truth in the old clichés—the one your servant is thinking of at the moment is the ancient "it never rains but it pours." Only a short while ago (TNR Feb. '55) this column carried a

review of Mahler's *Symphony No. 1 in D* in a first class performance by Kubelik and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; now comes Columbia, Bruno Walter and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra in another recording of the same work.

There will be, undoubtedly, many Mahler enthusiasts who have been waiting for Dr. Walter's reading of the score. Mahler and Walter were close friends and the jackets (there are two of them enclosing this disc) bristle with evidences of the intimate friendship between the two men. Certainly one has no quarrel with the performance recorded here although, in all honesty, it differs very little in interpretation from the Kubelik version. The greatest difference lies in the genial Dr. Walter's softening of some of the harsh lines and stressing, to some degree, the sentimental passages of the score in loving fashion.

As to orchestras and sound, the writer feels that the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra has it over their New York *confrères*, and London's sound is brighter and cleaner. The really big quarrel comes with the prices: Columbia charges \$5.95 for its disc; London's is \$3.98; and for the life of him, your reviewer can not justify the difference, either on artistic grounds or on a qualitative basis. This is not intended as any criticism of Dr. Walter, for one has nothing but admiration for both the man and the artist. He has written informative and sympathetic notes, and the jackets abound with photographs and other data relating to Mahler and Dr. Walter. Perhaps it would be charitable to assume that the cost of these notes is the reason for the extra \$2.00. W.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). One side, and **Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107** ("Reformation"). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1851) \$3.98.

Schumann: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 97 ("Rhenish"). One side, and **Schumann: Overture, Scherzo and Finale, Op. 52**. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1037) \$3.98.

Here is a pair of winners. The first record is one of the finest Toscanini discs we have heard in a long time. The maestro gets things going properly with the opening movement of the "Italian" in which he is very clearly out to set no new speed records. His tempo is just perfect, plenty of motion and zest, but not pushed and driven, as is nearly too often the case with conductors when they get hold of this lovely symphony. An example of an idiotic tempo is the Koussevitzky version — played beside the Toscanini disc, Koussevitzky could be classed as barely a gifted amateur. Toscanini plays the other three movements as well as he plays the first, bringing a high degree of clarity to the presto fourth movement. The orchestra sounds good and achieves many lovely effects.

Toscanini brings to LP what most folks will readily

agree is the best "Reformation"; many persons have been waiting for a truly fine reading of this work, seemingly difficult to project properly. We thought a recent version by Mitropoulos was pretty good, but this one tops it. Toscanini has pretty clearly the best of it in both these works, which makes this a most attractive disc. The NBC Orchestra has rarely sounded better under Toscanini, nor have they ever been given a better quality of reproduction (despite the fact that these were both taken from broadcast performances) excepting only a too prominent tympani, noticeable in the final movements of both symphonies — not enough, however, to spoil the general excellence of the disc.

Schuricht outclasses all other conductors of the "Rhenish" on LP, except for Bruno Walter whose disc is older and not the equal of the present one in matters of reproduction. The Paris Conservatory Orchestra under Schuricht's meticulous direction offers a beautiful reading of this beloved five-movement work and is reproduced with luscious tonal quality. The same forces serve to make a most enjoyable piece out of the rather unfamiliar *Overture, Scherzo and Finale*. The work turns out to be nearly the equal of a three movement symphony, and could fill that position on concert programs. The reading here is vital and compelling; we enjoyed it thoroughly. Reproduction, too, is excellent, yielding a big, rich full-orchestra tone in the finale. S.

Elgar: Enigma Variations. One side, and **Elgar: Wand of Youth Suite No. 1**. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMY-7) \$4.98.

Elgar: Wand of Youth Suite No. 2. One side, and **Quilter: A Children's Overture**. And **Coates: The Three Bears**. Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Hans-Jürgen Walthers. 1-12" disc (*MGME-3142) \$3.98.

Elgar: Falstaff, Op. 68. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1011) \$3.98.

The ever-loving *Enigma Variations* is available in still another version to challenge the recently issued Toscanini disc (*V-LM-1725). Whoever may win, Victor wins too, for it issues both. Boult's reading was considered a winner back in 78 days, and his new LP reading bears his familiar hallmark. It is good, a bit more gentle in spots than Toscanini, not quite as fiery in other spots. The reproduction is a shade sweeter. It is pretty much give and take. Sir Malcolm Sargent has a fine performance also (*L-LL-740) which you may wish to compare, and if Capitol ever issues a version by Steinberg and the Pittsburgh Orchestra, who have been programming it on a recent tour, the previous three may have a time competing, for Steinberg's reading is one of the finest we ever heard.

The *Wand of Youth* suites listed above are really two different suites, with no duplication of numbers.

The program notes for both discs are so sketchy we could not figure out what it is all about. If you are interested, we suggest the Boulton version, which is better played, better recorded, and more interesting music. The Quilter and Coates pieces are played perfunctorily and without polish, although the music is so charming that it comes through nicely despite the Hamburgers' playing.

The conversation piece in this group of discs is *Falstaff*, subtitled a Symphonic Study. Composed in 1913, it is a study of the character of Falstaff, is in a single movement with two interludes, and falls into four parts. Falstaff being the character he is, there is plenty of opportunity for musical character painting and description, much in the manner of Don Juan, Till Eulenspiegel, and Don Quixote. Sir Edward Elgar delights in drawing an immense canvas which chronicles many of the adventures of this corpulent rogue. The result is a typically Elgarian suite of pleasing music, made all the more so by the dynamic reading Anthony Collins and the orchestra give it. London has captured all of this with a big, bold tone that is singularly appropriate to the proceedings. S.

Debussy: La Mer. One side, and **Debussy: Ibéria.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1833) \$3.98.

Debussy: La Mer. One side, and **Debussy: Ibéria.** L'Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs Elysées conducted by D. E. Inghelbrecht. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5327) \$5.95.

Most persons who like *La Mer* agree that Toscanini's performance of it is without parallel. The present recording is the same as one previously issued, except that the sound has been "enhanced" and brought up to date, as has that of the accompanying *Ibéria*, appearing for the first time (by Toscanini). We would not wish to debate the two *Ibéria* recordings at hand, for Inghelbrecht achieves more atmosphere in some sections than Toscanini, and he has by far the better of it, reproduction-wise. In fact, the reproduction of Westminster's *Ibéria* is so good we believe it has been doctored-up, for it has an almost unbearable volume level in the percussion department. Some hi-fi fans may think it is great; we thought it rather larger-than-life. But Toscanini has an orderly and well played *Ibéria* which makes a good companion piece to his *La Mer*. If you do not like either of these discs, there is still a third, with exactly the same two selections on it, with Ormandy and the Philadelphians taking care of *Ibéria* and Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic doing *La Mer* (*C-ML-4434), performances we thought were excellent when issued, although it seemed to be a minority opinion. *La Mer* has fared well phonographically, for there are several versions from which to choose, including a superb reading by von Karajan (*ANG-35081), which has been received most favorably.

It is curious that the Toscanini *La Mer* seems better in sound than the *Ibéria*, although both were recorded

in the same studio within a day of each other, and both are issued here in enhanced sound. Considering the two prices asked, we would prefer Toscanini's disc, if for nothing more than his lucid reading of *La Mer*. S.

NOTE: Our critics do not see our editorials in advance; Westminster's are \$2.99 at present. Ed.

Symphony Favorites. Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3108) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550—1st Movement (Mozart); Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica")—3rd Movement (Beethoven); Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 ("Scotch")—2nd Movement (Mendelssohn); Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68—3rd Movement (Brahms); Scheherazade, Op. 35—Young Prince and Young Princess (Rimsky-Korsakov); Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43—4th Movement (Sibelius); Symphony in D minor—3rd Movement (Franck); Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36—4th Movement (Tchaikovsky).*

Starlight Encores. Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Barnett. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8296) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *La Gioconda—Dance of the Hours (Ponchielli); Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 (Liszt); Quartet No. 1 in D—Andante cantabile (Tchaikovsky); Marche Slav (Tchaikovsky); Danse Macabre (Saint-Saëns); Orpheus in the Underworld—Overture (Offenbach).*

If you believe that a meal is not complete without all its courses and that a symphony is not complete without all its movements, you will not like the first disc listed above. If, on the other hand, you don't mind sampling the hor d'oeuvres from one meal, the salad course of another, the entrée of a third, and so on, you'll recognize this disc for what it is: a sampler for the person just beginning to appreciate classical orchestral music. **NOTE:** None of the movements is performed in its entirety—only the principal themes are given. A list of available (Columbia Entré) LP's is given on the jacket, so that the interested student may pursue especially liked items further.

The Hollywood Bowl Orchestra does right well with the horse chestnuts (for meaning of this word, see TNR Jan. '55, p. 3) it essays.

Antheil: Ballet Mécanique (1924). New York Percussion Group conducted by Carlos Surinach. One side, and **Brant: Signs and Alarms (1953).** And **Brant: Galaxy 2 (1954).** Chamber Ensemble conducted by Henry Brant. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4956) \$4.98.

The jacket notes will give the reader a good idea of what this cacophony is all about. The first performances (1925/7) of *Ballet Mécanique*, both in Paris and in New York, were greeted by riotous audiences which engaged in fist fights. Antheil states

that the piece explores the Time-Space theory of engineering, closely aligned to the introduction of the cantilever principle in modern architecture. He wonders that people ask him why, for instance, he used the sound of airplane propellers; we suppose his answer today would be, "Why, because we didn't have jet planes in 1924!"

Henry Brant supplies us with more of the same noise. We must admit that it would be fun to see this music performed—to watch the battery striking everything within reach; but to listen to it requires a stronger constitution than we've got. Oh, we note that Brant employs some brass and wood-winds in his pieces; we didn't quite get that far.

Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter").** Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3103) \$2.98.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). One side, and **Schubert: Rosamunde—Overture & Ballet, Op. 26.** Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3102) \$2.98.

Three popular symphonies and the well-loved Rosamunde excerpts round out two welcome entries to Columbia's Entré series this month. Leinsdorf delivers straightforward performances which, if they add nothing to what has been said before in these works, wear well and are more than worth the asking price.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 in F. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F.** Soloists and Chamber Group conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3104) \$2.98. (TNR May '50).

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G.** Soloists and Chamber Group conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3105) \$2.98. (TNR May '50).

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B-flat.** Soloists and Chamber Group conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3106) \$2.98. (TNR May '50).

Columbia has dropped the Reiner renditions of the six Brandenburg Concerti from its Masterworks series and re-issued them on its Entré series, at \$2.98 per record. As such, these discs are bargains; the performances are fine, and the reproduction is quite satisfactory.

Kay: Western Symphony. One side, and **Thomson: Filling Station.** New York City Ballet Orchestra conducted by Leon Barzin. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9050) \$5.95.

There is not much American ballet music extant on records; those who may have been complaining of this drought may now avail themselves of the present

disc, which contains two of the most popular ballet scores of this country. Hershey Kay has worked such tunes as *Red River Valley*, *Old Taylor*, *The Gal I Left Behind Me*, and *Rye Whiskey* into his opus, making it as American as hot dogs. Virgil Thomson's *Filling Station* may be recalled from the Max Liebman TV Spectacular of last year; we were not impressed at the time, mostly because the cameras had a hard time following the action, and we think that ballet, to be fully appreciated, should be seen as a whole; television is not a good medium for it. If you like Thomson's music, you'll like this; it is pleasantly modern.

Britten: Sinfonia da Requiem, Op. 20. Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten. One side, and **Britten: Diversions for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 21.** Julius Katchen (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1123) \$3.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under PIANO.

CONCERTO



Lalo: Concerto in D minor. One side, and **Bloch: Schelomo.** Tibor de Machula (violoncello) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3072) \$3.98.

Dragonetti: Concerto for Double Bass. Mario Anastasio (double bass) accompanied by Harriet Wingreen (piano). One side, and **Bottesini: Grand Duo Concertante for Violin and Double Bass.** Mario Anastasio (double bass) and Jesse Tryon (violin) accompanied by Harriet Wingreen (piano). 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-1035) \$5.95.

Shostakovich: Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 40. Emanuel Brabec (violoncello) and Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9075) \$2.98.

Pay particular attention to the Epic disc listed above: it is magnificent! Tibor de Machula is the solo 'cellist of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra; we don't recall having heard his work before, and it is our loss. Backed up by van Otterloo and the Hague Philharmonic, he makes the *Lalo Concerto* a thing of beauty (which it is) and greatness (which is questionable). Changing masks from the gay and romantic to the tragic, he gives us an accurate and up-to-date reading of *Schelomo*, which we have needed. Epic's engineers have recorded both numbers just right, with fullness and brilliance at once; these versions will be hard to beat, and we enjoyed every minute of each.

Messrs. Anastasio and Tryon and Miss Wingreen try very hard, on the Classic disc, to sell us the double-bass, violin and piano in various combina-

tions. It is said that Bottesini and Dragonetti were both virtuosos on the bass viol. In spite of this, we lost interest about half way through. Recommended for students of the double bass; others will find this rough going.

Shostakovich's *Sonata for Violoncello and Piano*, Op. 40 dates from 1934, when the composer was more a musician than a Communist; it points up the lyrical voice of Emanuel Brabec's instrument, and since this is the only hi-fi recording of the work the present disc undoubtedly be your choice, if you wish this sonata.

Liebermann: Concerto for Jazz Band and Symphony Orchestra. The Sauter-Finegan Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. One side, and **R. Strauss: Don Juan**, Op. 20. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1888) \$3.98.

Under the headline "LONG HAIRS, HEPCATS—DIG THAT CRAZY COMBO," a United Press dispatch, datelined Chicago, Nov. 19, 1954, stated: "Orchestral Hall rocked last night when long hairs and short hairs harmoniously 'blew their brains out' before a flabbergasted but appreciative audience. . . . A mixed crowd of 'hepcats' and classicists heard the cacophonous exposition and voiced their approval by giving . . . Reiner and his orchestra one of the longest ovations ever to be heard. . . ."

Rolf Liebermann composed this *Jazz Concerto* on a 12-note row, and he tries to show how closely modern jazz and modern classical music parallel each other. We guess he has succeeded, but we think you'll agree that the Sauter-Finegan group outplayed the Chicago Symphony Orchestra by about 12 decibels.

However, the Chicagoans show what they really can do on the *Don Juan*; it is a shame to waste this sterling performance on the reverse side of this disc, because if you don't care for the *Jazz Concerto*, you'd not buy this one for the *Don Juan*. And if you find the *Jazz Concerto* interesting, you'd get the disc if it had Boris Karloff playing the flute to accompany Peter Lorre's recitation of *Mary Had a Little Lamb* on the other side.

Nielsen: Concerto for Flute and Orchestra. Gilbert Jespersen (flute) with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. One side, and **Nielsen: Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra.** Ib Erikson (clarinet) with the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1124) \$3.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

Torelli: (12) Concerti, Op. 8. Reinhold Barchet, Will Beh (violins); Helma Elsner (harpsichord); Pro Musica String Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 3-12" (*VX-DL-113) \$19.95.

Here is another example of beautiful packaging

(see Vivaldi: *La Stravaganza*, TNR July '54) and irresistibly charming music—great music, too. Rolf Reinhardt and the Stuttgart Pro Musica, who have already given us Vivaldi's *L'Estro Armonico* (TNR June '52) as well as the aforementioned *La Stravaganza*, perform these dozen concerti most attractively; the reproduction accorded them is second to none, being very close to and crisp. This music is the food of love; play on!

CHAMBER MUSIC



Schubert: Octet in F, Op. 166. The Vienna Octet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1049) \$3.98.

Schubert: Quartet No. 6 in D. One side, and **Schubert: Quartet No. 9 in G minor.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5224) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quartet No. 10 in E-flat. One side, and **Schubert: Quartet No. 11 in E.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5222) \$5.95.

Schubert: Rondo in A for Violin Solo and String Quartet. And **Schubert: Trio Movement in B-flat.** Anton Kamper (solo violin) and the Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. One side, and **Schubert: Trio in B-flat.** Anton Kamper (violin), Erich Weiss (viola) and Franz Kwarda (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5223) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quartet No. 14 in D minor ("Tod und das Mädchen"). Vienna Philharmonic Quartet. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66016) \$4.98.

Schubert: Sonata in A minor ("Arpeggione"). One side, and **Mendelssohn: Sonata No. 2 in D, Op. 58.** Roger Albin (violoncello) and Claude Helffer (piano). 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66015) \$4.98.

A raft of Schubert chamber works have appeared in the last few weeks, and we list them above. Worthy of especial note are the two Westminsters, *WL-5224 and *WL-5222, containing the only LP's of these works, and the two Telefunkens, the reproduction of which leaves something to be desired in this day and age.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Op. 74 ("Harp"). One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in D, Op. 64, No. 5** ("Lark"). American Art Quartet. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1073) \$2.98.

Our admiration for the excellent RCA Victor Bluebird Series has been expressed previously (TNR Jan. '55); it is now somewhat tempered by the lowering of Red Seal prices from \$5.95 to \$3.98. Program notes and first rate artists are surely worth a dollar, even if they might not have been worth \$2.97.

Nevertheless, we must state our unqualified approval of the rendition of the two quartets on the present disc by the very excellent American Art Quartet. And for those not making a collection of the

complete quartets of either composer, the coupling of the "Harp" and "Lark" is most apt. Such works as these need no program notes; this glorious music is fun to listen to without them.

Poulenc: Sextet for Piano and Winds. Wind Quintet of l'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française with Jean Françaix (piano). One side, and **Françaix: Quintette.** Wind Quintet of l'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35133TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35133) \$4.98.

Milhaud: Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano. One side, and **Bartók: Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet and Piano.** Reginald Kell (clarinet), Melvin Ritter (violin) and Joel Rosen (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9740) \$3.98.

The Wind Quintet of l'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française perform the Poulenc and Françaix works as well as you'd wish, and Jean Françaix further demonstrates his virtuosity at the piano as well as his ability as a composer. The Poulenc appears for the third time, the Françaix for the second; we prefer the present disc to all previous ones and remark that the Françaix coupling is especially apt with Poulenc, even more so, it seems to us, than Hindemith's *Kleine Kammermusik* (*CL-P-8258, \$4.98, TNR Sept. '54). However, our previous praise for the above-mentioned Capitol disc is not retracted, and possessors of it need not regret not having waited for the Angel record.

A brace of showcases for England's No. 1 clarinetist, Reginald Kell, appear this month; however, we are happy to report that Kell makes no effort to "steal the show" (unless he does so by not appearing to do so) but properly sublimates himself to the works performed, resulting in fine performances. One hesitates to place the present recording of Bartók's *Contrasts* ahead of that of Szigeti, Benny Goodman and Bartók (*C-ML-2213, Sept. '53); after all, Goodman and Szigeti commissioned the work. But we will say that it is just as good with, naturally, vastly superior reproduction. J.

Bloch: Quartet No. 3. Griller String Quartet. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-840) \$2.98.

Two of Bloch's Quartets are now available on LP: No. 2 (TNR Apr. '54) and the present recording, played by the group to whom the Quartet was dedicated. It must be terribly difficult to play, but the Griller String Quartet overcomes all obstacles and renders a performance beautifully mirrored by *ffrr* reproduction.

Shostakovich: Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 40. Emanuel Brabec (violoncello) and Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9075) \$2.98

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

CHORAL



Gallus: (10) Geistliche Chöre. One side, and **Isaak: Choral Music.** Vienna Akademie Kammerchor directed by Ferdinand Grossman. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5347) \$5.95.

The almost unlimited opportunity offered, via records, for hearing and studying music of the past is further increased this month by a sampler, as it were, of the music of Heinrich Isaak and Jacobus Gallus.

The *Ten Geistliche Chöre* are by Jacobus Gallus, né Jakob Handl. In those days it was fashionable (almost a necessity) to Latinize one's name. In German, of course, Hahn means "cock" so it was easy to turn Handl into Gallus and Jakob became Jacobus. Little is known of Gallus' life except that it was a short one (1550-1591). His writings were largely religious in nature, and the ten choruses recorded here are notable for a deep expressiveness and rhythmic vitality. Particularly fine are the *Pater Noster*, *Ecce quomodo moritur* (this was used by a later and more famous Handel in his *Funeral Anthem*) and *Mirabile mysterium*—this latter is an amazing work, considering the period in which it was written.

Isaak (or Ysaac or Ysack as he was variously called) was a native of Bradant or East Flanders and was born in 1450. History regards him as the first of Germany's masters of music. He spent most of his creative life (he died in 1517) in Italy, although he was attached to the court of the Emperor Maximilian. The nine selections recorded represent largely the secular side of his art and include, of course, the famous *Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen*.

The Vienna Kammerchor, a group of twenty-four young singers, was founded in 1946 by Professor Ferdinand Grossman, enjoys a fine reputation in its native Austria and is well and favorably known elsewhere by its many recorded performances. They sing here with expression, tonal purity and perfect intonation. This is a disc that can be recommended without reserve. As is usual with Westminster there are excellent notes and complete texts and translations. W.

Verdi: Te Deum. Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. One side, and **Boito: Méfistofele** — Prologue. Nicola Moscona (bass), Columbus Boychoir directed by Herbert Huffman and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1849) \$3.98.

From the Toscanini broadcast of 14 March 1954 RCA Victor has released this disc of the Verdi *Te Deum* and the prologue to Boito's *Méfistofele*. Both performances find Toscanini at his most eloquent, and the results are persuasive indeed.

The *Te Deum*, while it has been recorded before, has never been so well presented and performed. This, one of the four *Sacred Pieces*, is the most ambitious

of the set and may be looked upon as a companion piece to the great *Requiem*. Certainly it is cut from the same cloth, although it was written at a much later date. The performance is a spirited one and, fortunately, lacks much of the nervous drive that marred, for this writer, so many of Toscanini's efforts. The Robert Shaw Chorale and the NBC Orchestra sound like the first class organizations they are, and the *Te Deum* emerges as a vital and moving expression of a great man.

The other side of the disc is devoted to a luminous and well sung version of the strangely beautiful prologue to *Méfistofele*. As most readers probably know, the scene is laid in the nether regions between Heaven and Earth, and Mephistopheles challenges God over the sad state of man as not being worth tempting—they are all bad. The result is a wager over the soul of Faust (*Te noto Fausto?* sing the angels). The idea is, of course, from Goethe's *Faust*, but there is a parallel in the Book of Job.

The soloist is Nicola Moscona, who was certainly in fine voice for the occasion. He and Toscanini, plus the Chorale and the Columbus Boychoir, have themselves a time of it, and the results are as musically satisfying as they are dramatically effective.

There is a fine article by Vincent Sheehan on both pieces; the texts and translations are included. W.

Nielsen: (3) Motets, Op. 55 ("Afflictus sum," "Dominus regit me," "Benedictus Dominus"). Danish State Radio Madrigal Choir directed by Mogens Wöldike. One side, and **Nielsen: Commotio, Op. 58**. Georg Fjelrad, playing the organ in the Concert Hall of the Danish State Radio. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1030) \$3.98.

Carl Nielsen's music is highly regarded in his native Denmark, and London Records is recording many of his major works. This disc offers two works that are not only new to records but will be, in all probability, new to most American music lovers.

The *Three Motets* are, while not imitative in the least, spiritual descendents of Palestrina's and Bach's works in that form. They struck this listener as austere, almost forbidding; even the setting of the familiar opening verses of the Twenty-third Psalm seems far removed from the tranquility of the words. The other two, the eighth verse of the 38th Psalm and portions of the 31st Psalm also suffer from what seems to be a lack of interest in what he is writing. There may be those who will disagree sharply with the foregoing, but this is one man's opinion. Quite frankly, then, the writer found the music mannered and dull. The Danish State Radio Madrigal Choir sings, as always, with rare purity of tone and exquisite musical sense.

The other side of the record is devoted to an organ piece entitled *Commotio*, constructed "like a Bach toccata." This opus is obviously one of those compositions that give the technical listener more

joy than it does the average music lover. To be able to discern pedal points on G, then C sharp, to hear bare fifths, G major turning into the dominant of C (after a grand pause) may be all well and good, but it soon became apparent that this, too, was not the writer's cup of tea.

The capable organist is Georg Fjelrad and the organ, a modern one, is that in the Concert Hall of the Danish State Radio. Good sound, inadequate notes and difficult music make this a disc to be heard before buying. W.

American Church Music. Choir of St. Bartholomew's P. E. Church directed by Harold W. Friedell (organ). 1-10" disc (*GRAYCO LPM-101) \$3.75.

CONTENTS: *The King's Highway* (Williams); *King of Glory* (Friedell); *Springs in the Desert* (Jennings); *Requiescat in Pace* (Sowerby); *Toccata on "Vom Himmel hoch"* (Edmundson).

We couldn't get very excited about the choral side of this disc (which includes *The King's Highway*, *King of Glory* and *Springs in the Desert*). But the reverse side is devoted to solo organ works by Sowerby and Edmundson; and the organ at St. Bartholomew's is quite a thing, with 154 ranks of pipes and 146 speaking stops. The complete stoplist is given on the jacket, and Mr. Friedell really shows what the instrument will do. The reproduction is very revealing, and the disc is, perforce, recommended to students of the organ and to those who would wish to have a fine recording of this tremendous instrument.

Lully: Te Deum. (Sung in Latin). Claudine Collart (soprano), M. T. Cahn (contralto), Gerard Friedmann (tenor), Georges Abdoun (bass); Ensemble Vocal de Paris; Orchestre de la Sainte de Musique de Chambre de Paris conducted by Pierre Capdevielle, with A. Geoffroy Dechaume (organ). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5326) \$5.95.

Music by Jean Baptiste Lully is still little known by the majority of music lovers, so when a new and invariably first recording of one of his scores is issued, the listening experience is certain to be interesting.

This present recording of the *Te Deum* is no exception. Listening to it, the writer was struck by what seemed to him (in view of all the music written since, of course) the lack of musical imagination displayed by the once proud musical dictator of France. The music rumbles along, grandiose, full of sound and fury (to coin a phrase) and leaves one with a feeling of emptiness. Perhaps one expected too much; but, until hearing this disc, the writer had never heard a note of the piece, although he had read quite a bit about Lully and his music—read more, however, about Lully's influence, and thereby hangs the tale. Lully, there can be no question about it, had virtually complete say about what music could be published in France, and he ruth-

lessly suppressed any and all competition. It was only considerably later that other music, written during his lifetime became known. To say, then, that the *Te Deum* sounds like uninspired Handel is at once a condemnation of the music and a compliment to Lully's famous influence.

The soloists are excellent, the choir fine and the orchestra first-rate. The performance, judging from remarks in the jacket notes, is reasonably authentic (all this old music requires editing for modern performances); and certainly, insofar as the sound is concerned, there is plenty of genuine French *joie-de-vivre* in its execution.

While the music did not particularly appeal to the writer (the figure of Lully the man kept intruding), he can not honestly dismiss it as poor stuff—on the contrary it is definitely worth hearing, and those who are interested in something new (in the way of old music) are urged to investigate.

W.

OPERA



Beethoven: Fidelio (complete). (Sung in German).

Soloists, Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. Five sides, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21**. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LHMV-700) \$14.98.

Florestan Wolfgang Windgassen (t)
Leonore Martha Mödl (s)
Rocco Gottlob Frick (bs)
Marzellina Sena Jurinac (s)
Jacquino Rudolph Schock (t)
Don Pizarro Otto Edelmann (bs)
Don Fernando Alfred Poell (bt)

If the writer were forced to describe this new recording of Beethoven's *Fidelio* in a single phrase (as luckily he isn't) he would be able to state simply and truthfully, "It has class." Everything about it—singing, orchestra, conducting and package—are of the highest calibre—the sort of thing old timers expect of phonograph records, something worthy of being preserved—an honor, if you will, that is conferred on an artist or group of artists.

The late Dr. Furtwängler could have left no finer legacy, for it is undoubtedly his firm and musical hand that makes the performance so memorable. This is not said in any belittling sense, for the singers are all gifted vocalists and splendid artists. Martha Mödl, who sings the title role, is by all odds the best Leonore this writer has ever heard on discs or elsewhere; and that includes Kirsten Flagstad. Mme. Flagstad had more voice, to be sure; but she did not possess the fire and the passionate conviction her lesser known associate has—just hear Mme. Mödl sing the cruelly exacting *Abscheulicher! wo eilst du hin?*; and if you have an ear for drama, you will understand what your

humble servant has in mind. Sena Jurinac is a superb Marcellina, being just the right type of soprano for the part.

Wolfgang Windgassen, as Florestan, gives just about his best performance yet on discs. Here again is an artist who is greatly blessed vocally but even more so in the department of expression and color. His big moment, the aria that opens the second act, *Gott! welch Dunkel hier!*, is thrilling—it carries conviction and is musical. The directions for singing the aria are seemingly contradictory (calm, but with ecstasy); yet they are carried out perfectly. The other men in the cast, Frick, Edelmann, Schock and Poell are equally fine.

Despite all the vocal excellencies, however, it is Wilhelm Furtwängler who welds the presentation into a perfect whole; in the last analysis, it is his performance. All other recorded versions, including the highly praised (elsewhere) Toscanini set, pale into insignificance beside this inspired and vital production—one seems to be hearing *Fidelio* for the first time on these records.

The sixth side contains a performance of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 1 in C*, concerning which one could write several more paragraphs. It must suffice, however, to state that it is a well-conceived reading and a magnificently recorded version of this youthful work. It is virtually impossible to beat a combination of Furtwängler and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. W.

R. Strauss: Arabella (excerpts). (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Anny Felbermayer (sopranos); Nicolai Gedda, Murray Dickie (tenors); Josef Metternich, Harald Pröglhöf (baritones); Walter Berry, Theodor Schlott (basses); Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Lovro von Matačić. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35194TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc with libretto (*ANG-35194) \$5.98.

R. Strauss Operatic Excerpts. Lisa della Casa (soprano), Franz Bierbach (bass) and Paul Schoeffler (bass-baritone) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*LLL-1047) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Ariadne auf Naxos—Es gibt ein Reich; *Capriccio*—Wo ist mein Bruder?; *Arabella*—Der Richtige, so hab'ich still zu mir gesagt.

Arabella is the last of the Strauss-Hoffmansthal operas, the end product of a collaboration that produced a long line of successes such as *Elektra*, *Rosenkavalier*, *Ariadne* and *Die Aegyptische Helena*. Hoffmansthal, in fact, died shortly after completing the libretto of *Arabella* in 1929; but Strauss worked slowly, and this score did not appear until July 1, 1933. Its success has been moderate; it is a sort of second *Rosenkavalier*, much greater in Europe than in this country, where it achieved its first Metropolitan production in February of this year.

Angel Records has prepared a fine disc featuring the principal moments from the opera, to wit: the

duet *Ich danke Fraulein*, the first act finale *Welko, das Bild!*, a duet *Sie wollen mich heiraten*, the ball-room scene *Und jetzt sag'ich dich adieu* from Act 2, and the third act finale *Das war sehr gut*. A first class cast has been assembled—Elisabeth Schwarzkopf as Arabella, Annie Felbermayer as Zdenka, Josef Metternich as Mandryka and Nicolai Gedda as Matteo. These four principals sing well and are ably assisted by a quartet of excellent singers in the supporting roles. The conductor, Lovro von Matacic, a newcomer to records, is apparently an able director who understands his Strauss, for the performance sparkles and has plenty of drive.

The London disc, featuring, Lisa della Casa, is also a fine job and, as may be noted from the contents listed above, comprises scenes from three different works. Miss della Casa and her supporting artists do ample justice to the music.

The Angel package is a very sumptuous one, and includes notes on the opera, complete texts of the libretto, reproductions of letters, programs, etc. London's packaging is more modest, as is its price, and supplies only notes—no texts. Sound in both cases is very good. W.

Puccini: *Madama Butterfly* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Cetra Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Radiotelevisione Italiana (Turin) conducted by Angelo Questa. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-C-1248) \$14.94.

Cio-Cio-San.....Clara Petrella (s)
Suzuki.....Mafalda Masini (ms)
Pinkerton.....Ferruccio Tagliavini (t)
Sharpless.....Giuseppe Taddei (bt)
Kate Pinkerton.....Maria Cristina Foscale (ms)
The Bonze.....Antonio Biancardo (bs)

This is another of those operatic recordings that one is hard put to place in any particular category. If it were not for the existence of two previously recorded performances (RCA's "Treasury" set with Gigli and dal Monte, TNR Apr. '53, and London's really superior version with Campora and Tebaldi, TNR Apr. '52) one might say it fills the bill without going into ecstasies over it.

Clara Petrella, in the title role, sings well but still is an Italian prima donna when all is said and done. Vocally she is always adequate but manages to suggest very little of the qualities one associates with the little Geisha girl. To be sure, some of the fault lies with Puccini, but nevertheless...

Ferruccio Tagliavini, as the rascally Pinkerton, gives one of his better performances; but here, as in all his more or less recent recordings, he shows signs of having lost most of his upper register. Notes above a G take on a strained, tight quality that this listener found unattractive. His characterization (or perhaps one should say his attempt to characterization) is weak—he is usually content to sing and let it go at that.

Giuseppe Taddei, always a sincere artist, is the

best singer and actor among the three principals. He does a fine job. The others in the cast do well, Goro, in the person of Mariano Caruso, is especially effective as the slippery marriage broker. Mafalda Masini is an ordinary Suzuki.

Angelo Questa's direction seems to be largely governed by the wishes of his singers and, as a result, is undistinguished. The recorded sound is fair. A complete libretto is included.

This *Madama Butterfly* is for Tagliavini admirers first—others who have not yet added the opera to their collections are advised to investigate the other previously mentioned recordings. W.

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (excerpts). One side, and **Gounod: *Mireille*** (excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Mado Robin (soprano), soloists of the Paris Comic Opera and l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Richard Blareau. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-922) \$3.98.

We have praised Mado Robin previously (TNR July '53) when she did this same *Mad Scene*; she does equally well with the other show pieces on this disc, which includes arias from Gounod's *Mireille*. Robin is more florid than Mischeau (TNR Jan. '55); since three of the *Mireille* excerpts are duplicated, one will probably not want both.

Gluck: *Orpheus and Eurydice* (Act II) (complete). (Sung in Italian). Barbara Gibson (soprano), Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano), the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1850) \$3.98.

Orpheus and Eurydice was given in February at the Metropolitan Opera House; thus it would seem that the renewed interest in this work merits issuance of this disc, taken from Toscanini's broadcast of 22 November 1952, featuring Nan Merriman in the title role.

The second act opens with the Furies, at the gates of Hades, bemoaning their fate. Orpheus approaches and the Furies become violent, recounting the terrible-ness of Hell and their hatred for humans. At first refusing Orpheus admittance, they relent when he tells them his sad tale. Once inside, the Furies become their bestial selves again, the scene ending with the Dance of the Furies. The second scene opens on the Elysian Fields; a Happy Shade (Barbara Gibson) sings of the eternal joys of the spirits residing there. The scene closes with the spirits having brought Eurydice to her husband and starting them on their way to the land of the living again.

Since there is not a great deal of action in a Gluck opera, records afford almost as much enjoyment of one as an actual performance. Signor Toscanini, Robert Shaw and the soloists perform here with spirit and dedication; RCA Victor has captured the sound with good fidelity. J.

VOCAL



Berlioz: Les Nuits d'Été, Op. 7. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One and one-half sides, and **Berlioz: La Captive, Op. 12.** And **Berlioz: Le jeune Patre Breton, Op. 13, No. 4.** And **Berlioz: Zaide, Op. 19, No. 1.** Eleanor Steber (soprano) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4940) \$3.98.

This, the second recording of Berlioz' song cycle *Les Nuits d'Été*, has been awaited with considerable impatience, not so much, perhaps, for the cycle itself as for the first recordings of the songs *La Captive*, *Le jeune Patre Breton* and *Zaide*.

The cycle, *Les Nuits d'Été*, is, however, the major work; therefore the discussion must begin with it. Miss Steber's is, as mentioned before, the second complete recording—a London disc by Suzanne Danco and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra preceding it by several years (TNR Oct. '51). Now *Les Nuits d'Été* is a very difficult set of songs to sing from a technical angle alone since the vocal range required is great and, insofar as vocal gifts are concerned, one readily admits that Miss Steber has been blessed to a greater extent than Mlle. Danco. But that is not the whole story, by any means, for there is also the question of temperament; and, for this music, Suzanne Danco has it all over Miss Steber. The orchestral accompaniments (an integral part of the songs) are emphasized to a greater extent in the London recording, while Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Columbia Orchestra are relegated to the background in most instances, and they seem out of their element—their playing is timid, almost routine. This is not to say that Eleanor Steber's performance is poor—vocally she is a superior singer and, except in a few instances, makes her effects with intelligence and ability. One just wishes for a little more abandon, a little more élan.

The three separate songs are each superior examples of Berlioz' art. *La Captive*, based on a poem by Victor Hugo, is very famous, although to the best of the writer's knowledge this is its first recording on either LP's or 78's. The same applies to the other songs, although they are less well known. *Zaide*, in particular, is a thoroughly delightful setting. All three songs, as well as the cycle, are settings of poetry that is above the average; but then this is only what one would expect from a man of Berlioz' uncanny literary and musical taste.

The writer suspects that, although most ardent Berliozians already have the Danco recording of *Les Nuits d'Été*, they will also get this disc for the sake of the three other songs; and they will do well, for they are worth it; and the Steber version of the cycle is worth hearing from time to time. Columbia has furnished the texts and translations of the songs, something London failed to do.

W.

Schumann: Liederkreis, Op. 39. One side, and **Schumann: Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42.** Sena Jurinac (soprano) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5345) \$5.95.

These are the fourth and fifth recordings, respectively, of the two Schumann song cycles, although it is the first disc to include both works on the same record.

It is hardly necessary to discuss the music and poetry except to state that the songs represent Schumann at his most inspired and in one of his happiest forms. If the poetry seems affected to us (after all, who nowadays, expects a wife to refer to herself as "a lowly maiden" and to her husband as the "Lofty Star of Majesty"?) we must remember that nearly one hundred and fifteen years have passed since Schumann set these texts by Adalbert von Chamisso (*Frauenliebe und Leben*) and Josef von Eichendorff (*Liederkreis*) and, to put it mildly, times have certainly changed.

Be all this as it may, there are some truly lovely songs in both sets; and Miss Jurinac, the young Yugoslav soprano, is an ideal interpreter. Her light, clear and easily produced soprano is capable of much coloring and expressiveness. She obviously loves the music, and her pleasure in singing it is communicated to the listener—a happy circumstance that, unfortunately, is all too rare in these days of indiscriminate recording.

Technically the disc is excellent, and there are informative notes as well as the German and English texts. For Schumann devotees and *aficionados* of the lied it is a record to be highly recommended. W.

Couperin: (3) Leçons de Ténèbres (complete). One and one-half sides, and **Couperin: Motet "Audite omnes."** And **Couperin: Motet pour le jour de Pâques.** Nadine Sautereau (soprano), Janine Collard (contralto) and instrumental accompaniment conducted by Laurence Boulay. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-105) \$5.95.

Couperin: (3) Leçons de Ténèbres (complete). (Sung in Latin). Hugues (Cueond, Gino Sinimberghi (tenors), Franz Holetschek (harpsichord and organ) and Richard Harand (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5387) \$5.95.

These two discs of Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres* ("Service of Shadows") are both good—in fact, there is not very much to choose between them, either as to performance or recording. A choice may be made only on the basis of personal preference or value received. *Leçons de Ténèbres*, by the way, is the name given the services held during the last three days of Holy Week. During the course of the ceremony the lights are gradually extinguished until the service ends in darkness.

The Westminster disc utilizes the services of two tenors, harpsichord, organ and cello. The singing is good, if in no way exceptional, and the perform-

ances have the mark of sincerity.

In the Haydn Society recording the soloists are on the distaff side (a contralto and a soprano), uses a viola da gamba (in place of the more modern 'cello) and adds two violins in the third lesson, a procedure suggested by Couperin in his preface to the work. The singing is of the same order as that in the Westminster disc. More important, however, is the inclusion of some additional works by Couperin, two *Motets* dating from 1706. The arrangements used here are also new, having been made by Mlle. Laurence Boulay, who directs the performances.

In addition, the services of the distinguished French musicologist Norbert Dufourcq were enlisted to insure as accurate a performance as possible. Westminster may have done all this, but they were certainly at pains to conceal the fact if they did.

Recorded sound is excellent in both cases, and there are, then, two eminently satisfactory recordings of the music. These two discs, incidentally, are listed separately in the Schwann catalog as though they contained different music. Such is not the case.

W.

Arlen: House of Flowers. Pearl Bailey and Original N.Y. Cast with orchestra directed by Jerry Arlen. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4969) \$5.95.

Those who have seen and enjoyed this musical, which depicts the rivalry between two Madames whose brothels compete for local trade, will find this disc an excellent memento of the show. Pearl Bailey is an indomitable personality; her exuberance leaps out of the very record and makes the show click.

VIOLONCELLO



Bloch: Schelomo. One side, and **Lalo: Concerto in D minor.** Tibor de Machula (violoncello) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3072) \$3.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

VIOLIN



Bach: (6) Sonatas for Violin Solo. Emil Telmányi (violin). 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-20) \$11.94.

CONTENTS: *Sonata No. 1 in G minor* ("Sonata No. 1"); *Sonata No. 2 in B minor* ("Partita No. 1"); *Sonata No. 3 in A minor* ("Sonata No. 2"); *Sonata No. 4 in D minor* ("Partita No. 2"); *Sonata No. 5 in C* ("Sonata No. 3"); *Sonata No. 6 in E* ("Partita No. 3").

The point of this set is that Telmányi uses the Vega Bach bow, a bow on which the strings are loose and the bow itself is convex (rather than concave

like the modern bow). One can easily see that with such a bow all the strings of a fiddle could be played at once, rather than arpeggiated. Rolph Schroeder tried this (TNR Jan. '54) and did not find favor in this corner; Telmányi is better, but we shall still take Heifetz. That is, unless Francescatti essays the complete six sonatas (TNR Feb. '55).



ORGAN

The King of Instruments (Vol. I). "The American Classic Organ." G. Donald Harrison (narrator). 1-12" disc (*AEOLIAN-SKINNER 20204/5) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Principals; Flutes; Strings; Reeds; Mutations & Mixtures.

The King of Instruments (Vol. II). "Organ Literature—Bach to Langlais." 1-12" disc (*AEOLIAN-SKINNER 20628/9) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: On the organ at Symphony Hall, Boston: (3) *Schübler Chorals* (Bach); *Litanies* (Alain). On the organ in the 1st Presbyterian Church, Kilgore (Tex.): *A Solemn Melody* (Davies); *Paraphrase on Te Deum* (Langlais); *Carillon* (Sowrby). On the organ in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston: *Trio Sonata No. 1* (Bach); *Concerto in A minor—Allegro* (Vivaldi-Bach).

The King of Instruments (Vol. III). "Organ Recital." Robert Owen, playing the organ at Christ Church, Bronxville (N.Y.). 1-12" disc (*AEOLIAN-SKINNER 5905/6) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Meinen Jesum lass' ich nicht* (Walther); *Nun komm, der heiden Heiland* (Bach); *Concerto No. 2 in B-flat* (Handel); *Nun freut euch, Lieben Christen g'mein* (Bach); *Carillon de Westminster* (Vierne); *Noel, Grand Jeu et Duo* (d'Aquin); *Ascension Suite—4th Movement* (Messiaen).

To properly describe and evaluate the contents of these three discs would consume several pages of this booklet, and even then the most brilliant prose could hardly convey what is to be heard. Anyone who has any interest in organ music (other than the Jesse Crawford variety) should at least hear these discs, if it is not within his province to own them. The quality of reproduction is the equal of anything we have ever heard in organ recordings, and superior to a vast majority of what is available; we would say the reproduction is as nearly perfect as we know the art today—it leaves nothing whatever to be desired.

The first disc is similar to an old 78 album issued by Technichord some years ago, in which G. Donald Harrison, father of the rebirth of organ building in this country, narrates a lucid commentary on what makes an organ an organ—tonally, not mechanically. He tells about all classes and types of organ stops, and there is a superb demonstration of every pipe immediately following his comments. This disc is equally as fascinating as it is instructive. The examples played are masterful as well as illustrative.

Volumes Two and Three have no spoken comment, but are recitals of organ music as recitals of the organ should be and seldom are. Some of the best of the organ literature is presented in performances that are beyond reproach. One of the most wonderful listening experiences to be found in all organ records is the piece *A Solemn Melody*, by Davies, where the registration is mostly for string-tone stops, with a gradual emergence of organ tone preparing the way for the entry of the *Trompette-en-Chamade* at the climax. This is beautiful beyond description. The first movement of the Vivaldi-Bach *Concerto in A minor*, always a favorite, gets the best performance of its phonographic life on this disc.

The third disc, all of it played by Robert Owen on the magnificent instrument in Christ Church, Bronxville, N.Y., is a tribute to him as well as to the organ builders, and it further serves to prove what many persons have long known, but most architects have long denied, that resonant acoustics are necessary. And, lest we forget it, in the first disc may be heard the famous State Trumpet in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, N.Y., a most difficult thing to record but captured here in a way that will thrill you as few organ passages ever had. These discs are incomparable, and bear our highest recommendation.

S.

Nielsen: Commotio, Op. 58. Georg Fjelrad (organ).

One side, and **Nielsen: (3) Motets, Op. 55.**

Danish State Radio Madrigal Choir directed by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1030) \$4.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

PIANO



Dohnányi: Variations on a Nursery Tune, Op. 25.

One side, and **Rachmaninoff: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43.** Julius Katchen (piano) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1018) \$3.98.

Britten: Diversions for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 21.

Julius Katchen (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten. One side, and **Britten: Sinfonia da Requiem, Op. 20.** Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1123) \$3.98.

Not yet thirty, Julius Katchen has some dozen discs recorded for London, of which the present two are among the finest. The Dohnányi *Variations on a Nursery Song* appeal to us more in this performance than ever before on discs. Katchen is ably supported by Boult, with a result that is gratifying and mighty good music. Dohnányi may have used a rather threadbare theme for his variations, "Ah, vous dirai-je maman," but it is nevertheless a charming tune, and his handling of it is a masterpiece of wit and satire

which pokes fun at many schools of composition and at several actual composers. The test of its being good music is that it may be enjoyed by anyone immediately and without knowing anything about its intentions—it is just pleasant, well written and interesting.

The Rachmaninoff *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* is also a set of variations on a very well known theme, but it is of quite a different nature from Dohnányi's effort. More serious and larger in conception, the Rachmaninoff work has taken a firm and affectionate place in the piano repertoire. The old recording by Rachmaninoff and Stokowski is still considered unapproached by any succeeding versions, despite its feeble reproduction by today's standards. We have long admired the Kapell and Reiner version (*V-LM-9026) as a brilliant and percussive statement of the music; and many prefer Rubinstein (*V-LM-1744). Katchen plays the music well, but Boult is curiously lacking in snap and sparkle here, and the end result is less than one might desire.

Britten's *Diversions* were written for piano (left hand) and orchestra at the suggestion of the left-handed Viennese pianist, Paul Wittgenstein. Consisting of a theme and eleven variations of widely contrasting nature, this is an amazing work which has pleasing musical substance in addition to clever invention. Katchen's performance is virtuoso work as demanded by the score. Britten's *Sinfonia da Requiem* is a dramatic conception, in symphonic form, of a Requiem. It is dramatic and rather fantastic, considering its basic premise. It is in three movements, titled *Lacrymosa*, *Dies irae*, and *Requiem aeternam*, and we defy anyone to name the general subject of this work by just hearing the music with no previous knowledge of it. The scherzo middle movement will throw them off the track—if nothing else does. But it is mighty clever and rather powerful music anyhow, and worth a hearing. It is performed with eloquence and conviction.

S.

MISCELLANEOUS



Strange to Your Ears. Jim Fassett (narrator). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4938) \$4.98.

Some of you may recall an exhibit at the New York World's Fair of some years ago (1939?) which was designed to fool the eye; one item we recall particularly was a bunch of sticks, held up by invisible wires; when you looked at it from a certain angle, you would swear you were looking at a chair, but when viewed from 90° from the first angle, you saw it for what it was: simply a conglomeration of sticks, having no relation to each other. We see everything from a subconscious plane of reference; we can identify a chair because it looks like another thing we have seen previously, which has been already identified for us as a chair, but we can be fooled (and we were).

Now Jim Fassett, the man who slowed down bird calls for us (TNR May '53) so that we could hear

each note in a bird's trill, which in real life took only a second or two, but which was actually composed of some 120-odd notes sung so rapidly that our ear could not detect them, has produced another LP disc, this time distorting all kinds of sounds and playing tricks on our ears. Some he distorts by slowing them down, others by speeding them up, by producing them at several times their normal volume, or even inverting the sound. When he does this, the sounds change timbre as well as pitch; and they really do become "Strange to Your Ears."

The last half of the second side is devoted to a quiz; the listener is to identify twenty distorted sounds, and if he can do so correctly and send his answers in to Columbia, he might win a tape recorder, phonograph, or various Columbia records. We could not make much out of most of the twenty. J.

Andrés Segovia. Andrés Segovia (guitar). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9734) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Passacaglia* (Couperin); *Prelude & Allemande* (Weiss); *Minuet* (Haydn); *Melodie* (Grieg); *Mexican Folk Song* (Ponce); *Serenata Burlesca* (Torróba); *Siciliana* (C. P. E. Bach); *Preludio & Allegretto* (Franck); *Theme, Variations and Finale* (Ponce); *Cancion* (Aguirre); *Guitarreo* (Pedrell); *Serenade* (Malats).

Guitar Music of Spain. Laurindo Almeida (guitar). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8295) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Leyenda, Oriental, Sevilla* (Albéniz); *El Amor Brujo—El Circulo magico, Cancion del fuego fatuo* (Falla); *Anecdote 2, Neblina* (Segovia); *Serenata Burlesca* (Torróba); *Estudio XII* (Sor); *Recuerdos de la Alhambra, Capricho Arabe* (Tarrega); *Garrotin, Soleares* (Turina).

Carlos Montoya. Carlos Montoya (guitar). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1029) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Petenera; Tanguillo Rumbeao; Cante Minero; Variaciones por Tango; Granada; Regiones de España.*

The classical guitar of Andrés Segovia and the Flamencan guitar of Carlos Montoya are already well-known to readers of THE NEW RECORDS; it is merely necessary to announce a new disc by either, and his adherents will snap it up.

Laurindo Almeida is a new name to us. We learn that he has appeared as soloist with distinguished jazz bands, and that he has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Hollywood Bowl, and other classical concert stages with equal success. His program on the present disc is largely Spanish music; he performs each well, exhibiting a technique which will call Segovia to mind, slightly heavier in touch.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø indicates 45 rpm.

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Parker
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A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

Here is the first of a projected series of three volumes which will constitute *The Guide to Long-Playing Records*. If this book is an indication, we anxiously await Volume II (Vocal Music) by Philip L. Miller (\$4.50) and Volume III (Chamber and Solo Instrument Music) by Harold C. Schonberg (\$3.50).

Irving Kolodin, *Recordings* Editor of the *Saturday Review*, is a hard man to please; we have often noted works which pleased us to which he took a violent distaste—and occasionally vice-versa, but not often. But he is a man of sincerity and unquestioned honesty; further, he is a scholar whose opinion holds weight by virtue of his long experience and research; one may not agree with his opinions, but few will doubt his probity in arriving at them.

When, therefore, Mr. Kolodin publishes a guide to orchestral music on LP, wherein he purports to select from the entire orchestral LP catalog the "best" version of each work, we have an excellent reference which will keep us from going very far astray in selecting records for our libraries. Like a dictionary, such a book is dead the minute it rolls off the press, for hundreds of LP's have been issued since Mr. Kolodin put away his typewriter; nevertheless, after some five-plus years of LP, surely a great many definitive or nearly so recordings have been published so that, while some of Mr. Kolodin's favorites may have been equalled, probably few will have been surpassed.

Volume I has been arranged alphabetically by composer, then alphabetically by title or type of work. Mr. Kolodin has placed per-

formance above reproduction, and has mentioned poor recordings only where he feels his readers need to be warned. He regrets that the demand for LP's exceeds the manufacturers ability to satisfy it with really first rate recordings, resulting in a plethora of "the wrong players . . . performing the wrong repertoire . . ." and echoing our own "W's" oft-repeated observation that only a truly great performance is worthy of being preserved for posterity via records.

One needs only glance at the bulging current Schwann catalog to see the need for Mr. Kolodin's book. Even the seasoned collector will find it a useful companion when reading reviews of the new releases; for the layman it is almost a must. If your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be filled without delay; the price (\$3.50) includes postage to any point in U.S.A.

* * *

French as You Hear It. 3-10" discs and textbook in album (*ZODIAC 2001) \$14.95.

Spanish as You Hear It. 3-10" discs and textbook in album (*ZODIAC 2002) \$14.95.

NOTE: It is our usual custom to call our readers' attentions to new language courses in the editorial, but due to the large amount of editorial matter we have had the last couple of months we have not had space to mention these two worthy Zodiac sets. We are, therefore, covering them as a regular review and then placing this review in the Editorial. Ed.

There are several good introductory courses for French and Spanish selling for \$5 or thereabouts, such as Holt's *Getting Around in French (Spanish)* (LP only) and the Brochephone (78 only) sets (TNR Jan. '50 & Apr. '52). Then there are a couple of excellent "complete" courses: Linguaphone (78 & 45 rpm only, \$57.50) and Assimil (LP only, \$55.50, TNR Apr. '54). But we don't know of another medium-priced course which is reasonably complete; and it is as such that we recommend the Zodiac courses above. They are available only in LP (33 $\frac{1}{3}$

rpm).

The courses are quite similar, and since we understand a little French we'll talk about this one; the Spanish is just like it. There are 25 lessons, beginning with single words, graduating to phrases and finally to sentences and conversations. No English is spoken on the record, but the English translation, both idiomatic and literal, is given with the French in the textbook. There are pauses following each word, phrase or sentence to permit the student to repeat after the instructor. Eventually one plays the lesson without the text to see whether he understands what is being said. The course is completed with the recitation of two familiar stories: *The Three Bears* (*Les Trois Ours*) and *Little Red Riding Hood* (*Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*).

For the student truly wishing to learn a language and who knows nothing about it, the Linguaphone or the Assimil courses are to be preferred. For the person who wishes to travel and who is not interested in conversation other than to be able to ask "How far is it to the station?", the Holt or Brochephone will suffice. The present sets will teach you a lot more than the short courses, and you can pick up a good speaking knowledge of either French or Spanish; and they have the advantage of being compact and light, requiring little storage space ($10\frac{1}{2}" \times 10\frac{1}{2}" \times 1\frac{1}{2}"$), and they are easy to take off the shelf and play. The surfaces are smooth and silent, and the speakers have perfect diction. J.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning April 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake*. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 3-12" discs in album (*ME-OL-3-102) \$22.95.

While this set may not find its way into the average collection of classical records, it will be cherished by those devoted to the ballet and by many folks who just cannot get enough Tchaikovsky music. The ballet devotees will be particularly thrilled with the magnificent booklet, with many beautifully printed pictures, bound into the album. The album itself is a super

deluxe job that eclipses anything yet offered in premium priced merchandise—this is really plushy.

The music of *Swan Lake* that we usually hear is indeed a fraction of that which Tchaikovsky wrote, and the previously issued sets labelled "complete," turn out to be somewhat shorter than this set, which is absolutely 100% all there. Just how interesting all of this music will be to the record buying public is something we would not like to predict. It has many wonderful moments and some that are less inspired; but all of it is better than much of the stuff we are called upon to listen to from less gifted composers. In other words, here it is, all of it; and if you crave every bar of the original score, you are not likely to have it any better than this.

Dorati and the Minneapolis boys play this music with dash and relish and plenty of vigor; there is nothing draggy or stodgy about the whole six sides. We would not call the performance coarse, but we have heard more deft readings of the familiar sections; however, a super-slick performance of the whole business might be just too much. We are therefore probably better off with Dorati's type of performance, considering the length of the score. The Minneapolis Orchestra plays with admirable precision and great spirit. Mercury has captured the performance with fidelity that is not only high, but also a model of clarity, regardless of the volume. It is, to our ears, even better than some previous Olympian Series discs. This project is one to be admired and recommended to those who want an evening of Tchaikovsky. S.

Mahler: *Symphony No. 8 in E* ("The Symphony of a Thousand"). Soloists, Combined Rotterdam Choirs and the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eduard Flipse. 2-12" discs in box (*EPIC SC-6004) \$9.96.

Gustav Mahler's "Barnum and Bailey" opus (the description is his own) here receives its second LP performance. The genesis of this grandiose and monumental symphony was outlined in the review of its first recording (TNR May '52) and those interested are referred to p. 1 of that issue.

The present recording is a technical improvement over the earlier Columbia release, but not to any startling degree. Handling such large vocal and instrumental forces as are required for the performance of this symphony presents an almost insurmountable task. Epic's engineers have done a good job, by and large, and the resultant sound is reasonably massive. Certainly when playing a work such as this, one is more conscious of the inner workings of both the recording equipment and his own reproducer. In this connection, one is reminded of Samuel Johnson's dictum, re women making speeches; quoth he: "It is like a dog walking on its hind legs. One is not surprised that it is done badly—one is surprised that it is done at all!"

The unidentified soloists, the Rotterdam Choirs and

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ○ indicates 45 rpm.

Philharmonic Orchestra perform with vigor and imagination. Eduard Flipse provides the drive and inspiration that make this about as satisfactory a performance as can be achieved. Mahler's conception is, to say the least, on a colossal scale; and if he occasionally falters, he is not to be condemned. Like Jacob, he wrestles with an angel and it is not surprising that at times he goes halt and lame.

There are copious and well written notes by Henri-Louis de la Grange as well as the complete texts and translations. W.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43. Members of the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1854) \$3.98.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1852) \$3.98.

For the most picturesque, evocative, sensuous, and gorgeously tapestried version of the Sibelius *Second Symphony*, Stokowski, as might be expected, walks away with top honors with ease. No other LP of this work compares with this one for imaginative treatment. The members of the NBC Orchestra selected by Stokowski are guided through a reading which demonstrates the virtuoso capacities of the players in a thrilling manner. The recording was made in Manhattan Center, New York City, with what sounds like a multi-microphone set-up, in resonant acoustics. The result is sound that is not only clear and accurate, but most realistic and gratifying. The general effect is luscious and warm, with no sacrifice of brilliance; and it gives a different impression of the NBC Orchestra from that which we usually hear on discs.

Dyed-in-the-wool Sibelius devotees will, in all probability, not care for this reading, and they are advised to stay with the excellent version recently issued by Collins (*L-LL-822), or possibly the earlier Ormandy set. But for those who delight in the romantic aspects of this work, Stokowski will fill the bill in a thrilling manner that others will probably never duplicate. Our opinion of the work is mixed; we admit being fascinated with what this conductorial genius can summon forth from a score and an orchestra—as such it is wonderful listening. Just how good Sibelius conducting this is, is something about which we would not care to be involved. All we know is that it sounds magnificent and paints a vivid picture.

Cantelli's performance of the lovely Franck *Symphony* is hardly a lovely performance, and it therefore places rather far down in the list of numerous versions available. It is nowhere near the recent Ormandy disc (*C-ML-4939) for beautiful sound, not comparable to Paray (*ME-MG-50023) for fresh viewpoint, and it is poles apart from Furtwängler (*L-LL-967) in every respect. Cantelli is unbearably crude and coarse with his dynamics throughout and exhibits a complete lack of sympathy for the work at hand. The reproduction is good. S.

Bach—orch. Redel: Die Kunst der Fuge. L'Orchestre de Chamber Pro-Arte conducted by Kurt Redel. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-220) \$11.90.

Now comes a fifth version (on LP) of Bach's mighty *The Art of Fugue*; and with this entry comes duplication, for the present set will inevitably be compared with Dr. Scherchen's fine version on London (*L-LLA-2, TNR Aug. '50). Readers are referred to that issue of THE NEW RECORDS for a full description of the work.

We have refrained from expressing an opinion of preference among the previous four versions, since they were each of different instrumentation and a preference would have been purely a personal one; since *The Art of Fugue* was written in open score, theoretically one could play it on any instrument(s). Though it will be held by many that it sounds best on the organ, we will now state a preference for chamber orchestra; to us it sounds better that way. Kurt Redel offers a very fine reading, with great insight, though we admire Hermann Scherchen's performance equally; we will suggest Redel's on the basis of price (Scherchen takes three LP's).

Other versions of this great opus are organ (TNR Mar. '51), harpsichord (TNR July '54) and two pianos (TNR Dec. '54).

Rachmaninoff: The Isle of the Dead, Op. 29. One side, and Dukas: *La Péri* (Poème dansé). L'Orchestra de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1155) \$3.98.

Balakirev: Tamar (Symphonic Poem). One side, and Liadov: *Baba-Yaga, Op. 56.* And Liadov: (8) *Russian Popular Songs, Op. 58.* And Liadov: *Kikimora, Op. 63.* L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1068) \$3.98.

The beloved Ernest Ansermet is back again with a pair of discs that add two more gems to the crown which he has fashioned as one of our truly great conductors—he has about three dozen LP's in the catalog, a list as impressive as it is excellent. Actually he adds more than two gems, for there are six works presented on these discs, all of them from the romantic era of the Russian school save one, which is from the French school. In order, then, we have Rachmaninoff's *Isle of the Dead*, in what could hardly be denied is its best recording due to Ansermet's genius and London's reproduction in about equal proportions. Ansermet generates more power using less steam than either Koussevitzky or Mitropoulos, with a result that bears a dignity that is most befitting. Ansermet also brings order to the sensuous score of *La Péri* without losing any of the flavor of the scenario. The playing of the Paris Conservatory Orchestra is exemplary throughout.

The second disc presents music that has charm and interest as well as variety. Balakirev's *Tamar*, one

of his most important works, is a symphonic poem, to which Michel Fokine produced a ballet in 1912 using much the same story. Ansermet makes great music out of this score. For many the pick of this disc will be the Liadov *Eight Russian Folk Songs* in the finest performances we ever heard. These miniatures are seven bits of lovely, descriptive music, and Ansermet's way with them is inimitable. *Baba-Yaga* serves as a curtain raiser for this side of the disc, preceding the Folk Songs; the final number on this side is *Kikimora*, a delightful piece which some folks may think they have heard in the Toscanini version (*V-LRM-7014), but which they will find a different piece of music under Ansermet. If you like music of the romantic period, somewhat off the beaten track, these discs are surely worth investigating. S.

Bliss: Miracle in the Gorbals—Suite. One side, and **Bliss: Music for Strings**. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Sir Arthur Bliss. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35136TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35136) \$4.98.

Hanson: Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 21 ("The Nordic"). One side, and **Siegmeister: Ozark Set**. Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Hans-Jürgen Walther. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3141) \$3.98.

Whether it was the elaborate art work, pictures and notes accompanying the Angel disc, or whether it was the mood of the moment, we found Bliss' *Miracle in the Gorbals* more enjoyable this time than in its previous recording. This provocative ballet suite receives a fine performance under the composer's direction and with the able Philharmonia Orchestra. The story should be followed when listening to the music, for it is very descriptive. The Gorbals district of Glasgow typifies all slum communities, and the story which occurs there is good theatre, for which Bliss has constructed an admirable score. His *Music for Strings* is a virtuoso showpiece for string orchestra. Written in 1935 and first performed at the Salzburg Festival of that year, it contains a great variety of solo and concerted effects for strings. The second violins are treated as equal partners with the first in all matters of virtuosity or melodic importance. Despite the skill and intelligence of the writing it is also good listening; it requires some concentration on the part of the listener—this is not dinner music. The reproduction is fine, with a warm string tone and nice perspective.

Hanson's "Nordic" Symphony is presented here in its first LP version; Siegmeister's *Ozark Set* is also available in a version by Mitropoulos (*C-ML-2123). It would be a pleasure to welcome these performances of American music by a German orchestra, except for the fact that the orchestral playing is so ragged and poor that we cannot but offer our pity. We can find no excuse for such a recording and will conclude our remarks without trying to invent one. S.

Bach: (6) Brandenburg Concertos. Soloists and orchestra conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-DL-122) \$14.95.

Bach: (6) Brandenburg Concertos. Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Felix Prohaska. 3-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-540/2) \$11.90.

Two complete sets of the *Brandenburg Concertos* gives the purchaser some choice, for there are a few others previously available. Haas and Munchinger also use original instrumentation in their complete editions; Reiner and Casals have complete editions not using original instrumentation. The set which most persons will favor is the Bach Guild, for the playing of the orchestra is very secure, and the reproduction is generally fine, with a few balances here and there not ideal. The matter of balance is not solved perfectly by Vox, whose reproduction is as good as Bach Guild but inclined to be a little edgy, unless tone controlled. These are ambitious, and undoubtedly expensive, projects which are hard to evaluate in a paragraph or two without being unduly unfair. If the solo instrumental playing and the reproduction of the Bach Guild set are favored, the general spirit and feeling for the music imparted by Horenstein is to be admired; but the booklet which Vox supplies could be a deciding factor for many prospective purchasers. Vox issues an 80-page volume (10" x 13") full of interesting material, including good notes and the complete scores for the six concertos, all housed in an attractive album.

These versions using original instrumentation employ authentic baroque instruments such as the viola da gamba and recorder. Their presence gives the music a wholly different texture. Many persons may prefer one of the versions mentioned above (Reiner or Casals) which does not employ these instruments, for the resulting sound is more like what we hear every day even if it is not what Bach intended. Whatever your taste, the record companies have provided a fine latitude for your choice. S.

CONCERTO



Music of Vivaldi (Vol. III). Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9684) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto in G minor* (2 'cellos); *Concerto in B-flat* (violin, 'cello); *Concerto in B-flat* (oboe, violin); *Concerto, Op. 10, No. 2* ("La Notte") (flute).

Vivaldi Concerti. Nouvel Orchestre de Chambre de Paris conducted by André Jouve. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5341) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Concerto in A minor* (bassoon); *Concerto in F* (flute); *Concerto in G minor* ("For the Dresden Orchestra"); *Concerto in D minor* (oboe).

Judging from the sales of Volume I (TNR May

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø indicates 45 rpm.

'52) and Volume II (TNR July '54), Volume III of Vivaldi Music, done by the Virtuosi di Roma under the direction of Renato Fasano, should have a ready market awaiting it; it seems the public cannot get too much of these ingratiating works.

The Westminster entry in the Vivaldi sweepstakes features a larger orchestra, spirited playing, and reproduction much more revealing than the Decca; both would be considered high fidelity, the Decca being more what you'd hear at a concert, while the Westminster sounds more as if you were on the stage with the musicians.

Mozart: Concerto No. 12 in A, K. 414. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K. 595.** Ingrid Haebler (piano) with the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8710) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 5 in A, K. 129 ("Turkish"). David Oistrakh (violin) with the Saxon State Orchestra (Dresden) conducted by Franz Konwitschny. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 32 in G, K. 318.** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9766) \$3.98.

Mozart: Concerto No. 7 in D, K. 271a. David Oistrakh (violin) with the State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. One side, and **Vainberg: Moldavian Rhapsody.** David Oistrakh (violin) and Moisse Vaindberg (piano). And **Vladigerov: Fantasy on "Khoros."** David Oistrakh (violin) and V. Yampolsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-3002) \$5.95.

Ingrid Haebler's second LP, like the first, contains two Mozart concertos, and like the first also, she selects works of which there is not an abundance of recordings. The No. 12, has but two other listings, including a fine one by Lili Kraus with the Boston Symphony under Monteux (*V-LM-1783, coupled with Mozart No. 18 which was on Miss Haebler's first release). While the Kraus disc shows a little more firmness and authority, Miss Haebler plays mighty good Mozart by any standards of comparison. This young Viennese pianist, born in 1929, a consistent prize-winner, is evidently fulfilling the promise shown in her medal collecting days. We had the feeling, while listening to this disc, that she knows what she is doing, does it well, and does not overdo it. It is a graceful style of Mozart playing that is technically sure and stylistically good. The No. 27 is recorded by several other pianists, better known to most record collectors; all have different couplings. The orchestral collaboration and the quality of reproduction are both excellent, and we recommend this disc for those who wish this coupling.

David Oistrakh is around again on a Decca disc, which yields the same good reproduction and accompaniment which we previously found in the Brahms and Tchaikovsky concertos recently issued by the

same participants. His playing of this Mozart concerto is also as fine as the Brahms and Tchaikovsky, and one could hardly offer anything but praise for such a record. Oistrakh's previous recordings of this same work (recorded in Russia and issued on two labels over here) are completely eclipsed by the Decca release. We would name this as the preferred recording over the several others listed in the LP catalogs. The little *Symphony No. 32* provides a fine second side filler.

The Mozart *Concerto No. 7* is the best available version of that work; it is splendidly played and recorded with uncommon fidelity, considering its source. It is super-brilliant reproduction which, however, can be tone controlled to sound very well. We found the couplings, the rhapsody and the fantasy, completely boring; but fanciers of violin music might enjoy the violinistic exhibition they provide, and, of course, Oistrakh tosses them off with *élan*. S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Clifford Curzon (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1045) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19. Solomon (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 15 in B-flat, K. 450.** Solomon (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-12) \$4.98.

The Curzon performance of the Beethoven *Fourth Concerto* is going to have a lot of staunch followers claiming this to be the best version yet to reach LP, and they have a substantial basis for their claim. Not only is Curzon good, but the accompaniment is also, and the reproduction is of the best. This is a most gratifying record of a Beethoven piano concerto, one that strikes the listener as right, from the opening passages all the way through. Beethovenites will be pleased to know that Curzon uses the Beethoven cadenzas in the first and third movements and plays all the repeats in a further effort to make this a definitive edition. We can recall some other beautiful discs of the *Fourth*, but none that surpasses this one, all things considered. We believe this is the first accompaniment that Knappertsbusch has conducted for London (and possibly for any record); it is a fine job with remarkable detail and consideration for the soloist. The recording is an example of perfect balance between piano and orchestra, as well as of faithful piano tone. We could give this nothing but our fondest blessing.

Beethoven's *Second Concerto* is not his most popular work in this form, and we find it the least interesting of the mighty five. For those who do enjoy it, there are now several versions from which to choose, as well as the usual assortment of couplings to complicate matters. Solomon has used one of the less popular Mozart concertos, evidently figuring this disc

is for those who travel the less beaten paths. His playing of both works is of a high order; this man rarely turns in any performance that is not good. There is the accustomed clean technical playing and the solid interpretation. Why the Mozart No. 15 is just receiving its third recording while some of the others are getting more attention we do not understand, for the No. 15 is one of the prettiest and most tuneful of them all. As the accompaniments and reproduction both pass muster, we would welcome this disc as a worthy addition to the catalogs. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D, Op. 35. Mischa Elman (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1073) \$3.98.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 2 in G, Op. 44. Tatiana Nikolayeva (piano) with the State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by K. Anosov. 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-3008) \$5.95.

In the February 1955 issue of TNR we reviewed with glowing praise a recording of the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto* by David Oistrakh (*D-DL-9755), about the first time we ever went all-out for an Oistrakh recording. Playing that disc side by side with the present one by Elman, which we have just done, is indeed an education. From the moment Oistrakh's bow touches the strings he is absolute master of this work, from opening pages to the conclusion; there is no passage that floors him technically, or even for an instant catches him the least bit off balance. He sails through every measure at the tempo he has set. And while he has a definitely romantic attitude toward the whole piece, he is not guilty of excessive sentimentality, or of languishing needlessly over this little phrase or that little melodic bit. The whole work emerges with a dignity as well as a beauty that is perfectly served by his flawless technique. That is a performance which sets a mark few other violinists are likely to exceed, although some of the best of the day may match it as a fine performance in their own right. Elman is clearly not one of them. If this is not the poorest LP of the work, it wrestles uncomfortably for that position. The willful distortions and exaggerations of this reading are beyond description, and are matched only by the pitiful insecurity of Elman's fast-fading technique. Those who wish an individual interpretation on broad lines are referred to an LP by Erica Morini, now re-pressed (*V-LBC-1061), which is played with polish and precision.

The recording of the Tchaikovsky *Second Concerto* is labelled as "complete version." We have not ascertained where it differs from other LP's of this work, but admit it seemed longer and a bit more tedious. Tatiana Nikolayeva is an accomplished pianist, one of the leading pianists in Russia today, with an adequate technique and commendable artistry. We would, however, recommend one of the several other LP's of this work which offers a coupling of

another work at the same price or a lower price, as well as reproduction equal to this wiry Soviet example. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Dohnanyi: Quartet in D-flat, Op. 15. Curtis String Quartet. One side, and **Dohnanyi: Quintet in E-flat minor, Op. 26, No. 2.** Curtis String Quartet with Vladimir Sokoloff (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5301) \$5.95.

Dohnanyi: Serenade in C, Op. 10. One side, and **Françaix: Trio in C.** And Berkeley: **Trio.** Jean Pougnet (violin), Frederick Riddle (viola) and Anthony Pini (violinello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5316) \$5.95.

Several first (LP) recordings of chamber works by Ernst von Dohnanyi this month are worthy of note. The *Quartet in D-flat, Op. 15*, dates from 1907, is in three movements, and abounds in original melodies. The first movement is sprightly (Andante, Allegro, Adagio, Allegro), the second energetic (Presto acciaccato), and the third slow, rich in sonorous beauty (Molto Adagio, Animato, Andante, Allegro). . . . The *Quintet in E-flat minor, Op. 26, No. 2* dates from 1921 and is also in three movements: Allegro non troppo, Allegretto and Moderato. We did not have time to play either of these works more than once, but we think you'll agree that each is worthwhile and might, with repeated hearings, become chamber music "finds of the month," so to speak. The Curtis String Quartet (augmented in the *Quintet* by Vladimir Sokoloff at the piano) performs each piece with evident devotion and sympathy.

It is said that Brahms was one of Dohnanyi's idols, and that fact is evident in the *Serenade, Op. 10*, which dates from 1904; we might describe it as romantic music with a bite. . . . Françaix *Trio* we did not find so appealing; it seems to be quite a workout for the instrumentalists, however. . . . Lennox Berkeley is one of Britain's most respected contemporaries, we are told, and this *Trio* (1944) is reputedly one of his best and most original works.

The Golden Age of Brass. The Brass Ensemble directed by Roger Voisin. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN UN-1023) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Canzon septimi toni No. 1* (Gabrieli); *Toccata* (Bonelli); *Sonata* (Buonamente); (2) *Ayres for Cornetts and Sagbuts* (Adson); *Music for King Charles II* (Locke); *Music for Queen Mary II* (Purcell); *Sonata No. 2* (Pezel); *Bänkelsängerslieder* — *Sonata* (Anon.); *Sonata Nos. 18 & 19* (Reiche); *Intrade, Sarabande and Bal* (Pezel); *Die Kunst der Fuge* — *Contrapunctus I* (Bach).

If you are interested in this music, you will find exceptionally informative notes on the jacket of this disc; many of our major companies (notably London) might use these notes as models, for some discs are notoriously skimpy in this department. We will not

repeat these notes here; suffice it to say that Roger Voisin organized the Brass Ensemble in 1952 with the idea of bringing before the public some of the vast amount of literature for brass which has accumulated over the years. He covers 150 years on this LP disc, beginning with Gabrieli (1557-1612) and ending with Bach (1685-1750); most of these works will probably be new to you (they were to us); each is, in its way, interesting, and each is well-performed. If you are a little tired of strings and keyboards, here is a record which will refresh you and give you that needed change of pace.



OPERA

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw, and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6112) \$11.98.

Richard.....Jan Pearce (t)
Renato.....Robert Merrill (bt)
Amelia.....Herva Nelli (s)
Ulrica.....Claramae Turner (ms)
Oscar.....Virginia Haskins (s)
Silvano.....George Cehanovsky (bt)
Sam.....Nicola Moscona (bs)
Tom.....Norman Scott (bs)

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of Radiotelevisione Italiana (Turin) conducted by Angelo Questa. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-B-1249) \$9.96.

Richard.....Ferruccio Tagliavini (t)
Renato.....Giuseppe Valdengo (bt)
Amelia.....Maria Curtis Verna (s)
Ulrica.....Pia Tassinari (ms)
Oscar.....Maria Erato (s)
Silvano.....Alberto Albertini (bt)
Sam.....Marco Stefanoni (bs)
Tom.....Vito Susca (bs)

Toscanini's performance and recording of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* must be placed in the modern miracles class, for it is doubtful whether anything like it was ever captured on records before, and it is extremely unlikely that the circumstances that produced it will ever be duplicated. It is, as Olin Downes has noted, probably Toscanini's last operatic performance in this country. That the members of the cast, chorus and orchestra sensed that it was an occasion with a capital "O" is certain, for none of them ever sang or played better. RCA Victor, in recording and processing the tape has produced recorded sound that is virtually perfect. This is all the more remarkable when one considers that it was made from a performance for radio broadcasting (although separate and special microphones for the recording equipment were employed), and the two sections of the performance were made, of necessity, a week apart! Yet there is a continuity and homogeneity that one seldom encoun-

ters in a performance given all of a piece.

It is futile to write of the principals—they are well known to all music lovers; all one needs to note is that they are all in good voice and that they surpass themselves. How Toscanini managed to produce the excitement—the white heat at which the opera is performed—is a mystery. Nevertheless, the work emerges as blazing triumph for the aged conductor. This writer has often criticized Toscanini for his often relentless driving of singers and orchestra (notably in the recordings of *Bohème*, *Traviata* and the *Requiem*), but here the happy medium has been achieved—the drive is present (and how!), but not at the expense of musical values.

By some chance or possibly by design, the orchestra is given more prominence than is usual in recorded operatic performances, and the result is a much closer approximation of opera house balance. There is no gainsaying that the one salient feature of the set, however (and this despite the excellence of the soloists and chorus) is primarily the triumph for Arturo Toscanini (and, of course, the man who made it possible, Giuseppe Verdi).

The Cetra set has purposely been left to the end, for there is little that can be said for it after hearing the Toscanini recording. The singers are excellent, but the set has none of the fire and excitement of the Victor issue. Ferruccio Tagliavini is a little less wooden than usual, but his vocal mannerisms are beginning to pall on this writer. Pia Tassinari is a fine, if somewhat light-voiced Ulrica. Maria Verna is a so-so Amelia, Valdengo a good Renato; but they are all outclassed by the other recording. It is a pity the set had to come out when it did.

RCA Victor has supplied informative notes and a newly prepared translation of the Italian libretto that make understandable reading. Cetra has done the same on a more modest basis. Finally one considers the two prices—well, any opera lover who does not add the Victor set to his collection for \$2 more is making the mistake of a lifetime. W.

Rossini: L'Italiana in Algeri (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala Opera Co. (Rome) conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35192/3TP) \$6.98. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3529B) \$10.98.

Mustafa.....Mario Petri (bs)
Elvira.....Graziella Scutti (s)
Lindoro.....Cesare Valletti (t)
Isabella.....Giulietta Simonato (ms)
Zulma.....Mafalda Masini (ms)
Haly.....Enrico Campi (bs)
Taddeo.....Marcello Cortis (bt)

A great many astonishing (at least to this reviewer) scores, both orchestral and vocal, are being brought to light to try to satisfy the almost endless demand for LP records. This, of course, can be a mixed blessing. But when a recording company comes up

with such a plum as Angel Records has this month, one can only shout huzzas.

L'Italiana in Algeri (literally, *The Italian Girl in Algiers*) is a product of Rossini's twenty-first year, the same year, incidentally, that saw the composition of *Tancredi*. That *L'Italiana in Algeri* is the work of a twenty-one year old seems almost unbelievable; but it is. Certainly the fun, high spirits and general élan are those of a youth, but the melodious invention, the craftsmanship and sure sense of the theatre seem to be those of a much more mature composer.

The cast does not have a single weak member. The four principals are superb. Giulietta Simionato, whom some might remember in the title role of *Cetra's* recording of *La Cenerentola*, is an utterly bewitching Isabella. Her well produced and wonderfully flexible mezzo is a constant source of joy, and her singing is notable for its expressiveness and high spirits. Cesare Valetti does a fine job as Lindoro. His is a bright, high tenor, capable of much coloring and, while some of the music lies very high, he is always equal to the occasion. Mario Petri has a difficult role both vocally (it is very florid in parts) and interpretively (the opportunities to clown and be hammy are almost unlimited); yet he is never at a loss, and the character is developed logically and musically. Taddeo, in the person of Marcello Cortis, is amusing, vocally apt and always in character.

The lesser roles are more than capably sung by a trio of young singers with excellent voices—no skimping here. Mo. Giulini directs a performance that moves along briskly and is never dull; he keeps singers and orchestra in line beautifully. Much of the credit for the success of the performance may be laid at his door.

The opera, as recorded here, is abridged; but whoever did the job did it well, for there are few, if any, incongruities. Very fine recorded sound, a readable libretto and notes by Francis Toye are additional enjoyable features. W.

Verdi: Rigoletto (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of l'Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Alberto Erede. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-25) \$14.94.

Duke of Mantua.....Mario del Monaco (t)
Gilda.....Hilde Gueden (s)
Rigoletto.....Aldo Protti (bt)
Sparafucile.....Cesare Siepi (bs)
Maddalena.....Giulietta Simionato (s)
Monterone.....Fernando Corena (bt)
Marullo.....Pier Luigi Latinucci (bt)
Ceprano.....Dario Caselli (bt)
Countess Ceprano.....Mario Castelli (s)
Borsa.....Piero di Palma (t)

There are many factors involved in a successful and communicative operatic performance in the opera house; and, since there are several additional stumbling blocks when the performance is one for recording, the original factors become at least twice as

important and three times more difficult of achievement.

At first glance, the present London set would seem to have everything: good recording and top flight singers (even in the minor roles); but as a performance it is as flat as the surfaces on which it is recorded. The fault lies in several places. To begin with, little or no effort seems to have been made to get the singers "inside" their roles. Del Monaco, never an expressive singer at best, is a stentorian Duke who never goes below an *mf*, usually operating somewhere between *f* and *ff*—it gets monotonous. Aldo Protti is a disappointment in the title role, particularly after his fine *Iago* of a month or so ago. His *Rigoletto* is note perfect, nothing more—he portrays about as much emotion as one would expect from a wooden Indian. The same applies to Siepi's *Sparafucile*; Corena's *Monterone* was also a distinct letdown. Hilde Gueden is a passable *Gilda*, but one has heard better both vocally and histrionically.

The blame for the dull performance, after realizing that the singers do not seem to be really trying, must be placed at the conductor's door. Mr. Erede may have been overwhelmed by all the vocal talent he was directing, for he seems to allow them to set the pace. Certainly a real top flight conductor could have done much more with much less vocal splendor—an example of this latter condition is the memorable *Faust* directed by Sir Thomas Beecham for RCA Victor some years ago, wherein he had very ordinary singers. Granted that Alberto Erede is no Sir Thomas, the writer still does not think he is unreasonable in expecting more than is realized here.

All of which brings up the last part of these notes. RCA Victor's recording (TNR Nov. '50) of this magnificent music remains the final word so far. Jan Peerce, who lacks the vocal gifts of Mario del Monaco, is an infinitely superior Duke. Erna Berger is an unapproachable *Gilda*, Leonard Warren a strikingly fine *Rigoletto*, and so on down the line. The writer is sure of his facts here, for he played the two sets aria for aria. Cellini, the Victor conductor, was able, with the cooperation of his singers, to present a really high powered performance that still stands as the best recorded *Rigoletto*. W.

Puccini: Manon Lescaut (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Francesco Molinari Pradelli. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-28) \$14.94.

Manon Lescaut.....Renata Tebaldi (s)
Des Grieux.....Mario del Monaco (t)
Lescaut.....Mario Boriello (bt)
Geronte di Ravoir.....Fernando Corena (bs)
Edmondo.....Piero di Palma (t)
Innkeeper.....Antonio Sacchetti (bs)
Singer.....Luisa Ribacchi (ms)
Dancing Master.....Adelio Zagonara (t)

By now the pattern of the Tebaldi-del Monaco-

London (frr) operatic recordings is pretty well established. Miss Tebaldi invariably sings exquisitely and Sgr. del Monaco sings with great power, often with considerable tonal beauty, but seldom with any degree of subtlety. The recording, while good, usually favors the singers at the expense of the orchestra.

The present *Manon Lescaut* follows the pattern exactly. Mario del Monaco, once past the lovely *Donna non vidi mai*, seems inclined to leave all trace of *bel canto* behind and sings right lustily for the remainder of the opera. Now this is all right if you like it—the writer, admittedly spoiled by many recordings of the past and a few of the present, would prefer a little more of des Grieux and a little less del Monaco. For Renata Tebaldi, however, nothing but bouquets; her singing throughout the opera falls very easily on the ear, and she makes a very fine thing of her principal aria *In quelle trine morbide* and the duet *Tu, tu amore*. Her voice is always equal to the demands of the music, and she has the ability to convey the emotions of the role without coming apart at the seams histrionically. This, it may be added, is an all too rare accomplishment nowadays.

The other members of the cast are excellent and notable performances are turned in by Fernando Corena and Piero di Palma. As *Manon's* rascally brother, Mario Boriello is convincing. Maestro Pradelli is pretty good—he never gives the singers too much license nor does he keep too tight a rein on them.

The recorded sound is good, but singer-orchestra balance favors the former. A libretto is included. This is, of course, despite the reservations concerning del Monaco, far and away the best *Manon Lescaut* to date and should satisfy most admirers of the opera.

W.

Debussy: Pelléas et Mélisande (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists, Elisabeth Brasseur Choir and l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 3-12" discs in album (*EPIC SC-6003) \$14.94.

Pelléas.....Camille Maurane (t)
Mélisande.....Janine Micheau (s)
Golaud.....Michel Roux (bt)
Arkel.....Xavier Depraz (bs)
Genevieve.....Rita Gorr (s)
Yniold.....Annik Simon (s)
A Physician }
A Shepherd }Marcel Vigneron (bt)

This is the second extant LP version of Debussy's only opera although it is, numerically, the third. The earliest, on RCA Victor (TNR Dec. '51), has now been deleted; thus the only other performance is London's first class recording (TNR Nov. '52) made by Ansermet.

Epic's recent issue is admirable in many respects. Janine Michaud and Camille Maurane make an excellent pair of lovers (vocally) and each is convincing

in his role. Mlle. Michaud's lyric soprano is fairly well known to record collectors, and she sings here with feeling and style. M. Maurane will be new to most discophiles and, while Pelléas makes few demands (technically speaking) on the tenor, his voice seems to be a manly one, pleasant and of good quality. One would like to hear him in other roles before sticking the neck out as to his vocal endowments. Of his musicianship one can safely state that it is sure, for his characterization is a good one. Michel Roux and Xavier Depraz are two first class artists who do very well indeed as Golaud and Arkel, respectively.

In *Pelléas et Mélisande*, as in every other musical work, the conductor is (or should be) head man. Jean Fournet is one of the few contemporary French conductors who can be depended upon to direct with authority and taste. Here his conception seems to be more straight-forward and forthright than Ansermet's. For this writer, who is occasionally upset by the nebulousness of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, this came as a refreshing change. However, as the French (as well as those who kiss cows) are fond of saying, *Chacun à son goût*.

The recorded sound is good, there is a libretto and fine, in fact very superior, notes by Eugene Bruck.

W.

CHORAL



Brahms: Ein deutsches Requiem (complete). (Sung in German). Lore Wissmann (soprano); Theo Adam (baritone); Frankfurt Opera Chorus and Orchestras of the Frankfurt Opera and Frankfurt Museum conducted by Georg Solti. 2-12" discs in album (*CL-PBR-8300) \$10.31.

The origins of Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* are obscure; some think it was written for Brahms' mother, others feel it was intended for Robert Schumann. In all events, the work was conceived over a period of years and was subjected to several revisions. In 1867 the first performance took place, but only the first three parts were played. Later, in 1868, a "complete" performance was given in Bremen except for what is now known as the fifth part, which was composed later. The *Requiem* in its present seven part version was first sung in Leipzig in 1869.

Since this is the third recorded performance of the music, any remarks about its musical nature would be superfluous. Liturgical, however, it is not, the text having been compiled by Brahms from the Old and New Testaments along with some verses from the Apocrypha. The result is at once unique and personal. Wrote Brahms, on one occasion, "People do not know that we North Germans long for the Bible every day and do not let a day pass without it. In my study I can lay my hand on my Bible even in the dark." This illuminating statement is a good clue to the *Requiem*—it is as real and sincere as any music ever written.

The performance here is an excellent one from an artistic angle—the soloists, chorus and orchestra have been welded into a unit whose purpose is to present the *German Requiem* to the best of its very considerable abilities. Much credit for the outstanding success of these discs must go to Georg Solti, who directs with loving care.

Capitol has seen to it that the engineering is superior and the result is the best recording of this great work of Brahms'. There are fine notes and the complete texts. Highly recommended. W.

Purcell: Come, Ye Sons of Art. (Sung in English).

Margaret Ritchie (soprano); Alfred Deller, John Whitworth (counter-tenors); Bruce Boyce (baritone); the St. Anthony Singers and l'Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Anthony Lewis, with Ruggero Gerlin (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (*OL-DL-53004) \$2.98.

This little ten inch disc not only contains some very beautiful music but it also offers, and at a very modest price, a wonderful introduction to the art of Henry Purcell.

Come Ye Sons of Art was first performed on 30 April 1694; it is the last of six odes Purcell wrote for Queen Mary's (wife of William III) birthday. There are assorted solos, choruses and concerted numbers sung by a fine group of soloists. Of particular interest are the two "counter tenors" although, to be honest, their girlish warblings rather upset the writer. Nevertheless, counter tenors are what Purcell called for and l'Oiseau-Lyre delivers them. Incidentally, Purcell himself reputedly was a fine counter tenor although his natural voice was bass!

Come Ye Sons of Art is scored in typically Purcellian fashion for flutes, oboes, trumpets, drums and strings, and the work is joyous in nature as befits the occasion for which it was written. Margaret Ritchie sings very well; her clear high soprano pleased one listener very much. Bruce Boyce, who seemed more like a bass than a baritone, delivers his arias in sterling fashion.

The orchestra and chorus, under Anthony Lewis' vigorous direction, play and sing with spirit and enjoyment. The recorded sound is good and there are adequate notes and texts. A fine little disc, well worth investigating. W.

Schütz: The Christmas Story. (Sung in German).

Gunthild Weber (soprano); Herbert Hess (tenor); Paul Gummer (bass); Kantorei der Dreikönigskirche, Frankfurt; and the Orchestra of the Collegium Musicum conducted by Kurt Thomas, with Hans Drewanz (harpsichord) and Klaus Storck (violoncello). 1-12" disc in box (*OL-50020) \$4.98.

A plague on record companies who neither take the pains properly to identify the music on their discs nor have the elementary courtesy to supply notes concerning the music they have recorded.

The foregoing outburst is occasioned by the realization that this is the third recording of "something" by Heinrich Schütz concerning the Nativity. Schwann lists two (this one has not been listed yet) separately: one issued by REB is entitled *Christmas Story* (cantata); the other, issued by Colosseum, *The Nativity* (oratorio). And now we have another *Christmas Story*. The writer strongly suspects that all are Schütz's *Historia von der Geburt Gottes*, but why it or they can not be so identified is beyond one. It is also extremely likely (one is sorry to have to guess so much, but what will you?) that the score has been "edited," for the music is very old (1664), and such is the usual (although not always unjustified) fate of much old music.

The performance, here is on the dull side, being stodgy and pedantic. The soloists are adequate but nothing really seems to take fire, as the saying goes. This could be due to any number of reasons: a lack of understanding or sympathy on the part of the performers; or the listener (let's be honest); or editing that has been so injudicious as to destroy Schütz's magnificent conception, to mention but a few.

The recording is good and the texts are supplied; but notes. . . . W.

Victoria: Missa pro Defunctis. One and one-half sides, and **Victoria: Magnificat in IV Toni.** Choir of the Choral Academy, Lecco (Italy) directed by Guido Camillucci. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8930) \$5.95.

"Many evil and depraved men," wrote Tomás Luis de Victoria in 1581, "abuse music as an excitant in order to plunge into earthly delights, instead of raising themselves by means of it into the contemplation of God and divine things." Victoria was a priest, as intense and mystical as only a Spaniard can be; and his philosophy, as revealed in the above quotation, is borne out in his music which abounds in consuming mystic ardor, unearthly ecstasy and a burning aspiration towards the infinite. "In fact," writes Cecil Gray, "his art is sometimes almost too intensely religious to be altogether devotional. He resembles that saint who, when celebrating mass, attained to such a pitch of ecstasy and illumination that he was often suddenly levitated to a considerable height above the ground, to the wonder and admiration of the onlookers, but somewhat to the detriment of the divine rite."

So much, then, for the nature of Victoria's music. The writer was able to find some evidences of the "unearthly ecstasy" and "burning aspirations" and was mightily impressed with the excellence of the Lecco Academy's singing. Mystic and devout the music and performances certainly are, however. The *Missa pro Defunctis* is an extended work, full of Olympian calm and grandeur, austere almost to the point of aceticism, yet curiously human—in short, like all great music, it is full of contradictory emotions. The *Magnificat* is a shorter work and equally beautiful.

It is hardly likely this record will enjoy wide popu-

larity, but for those interested in early music (this could be either early baroque or late renaissance, depending on the particular observer) it offers as fine an example of Victoria's great art as may be found on discs. W.

Sad Am I without Thee. The Trapp Family Singers directed by Dr. Franz Wasner. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9759) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Alt-Niederländische Tänze; Innsbruck, ich muss dich lassen; Kuckuck hat sich zu Tod gefall'n; Trio Sonata* (excerpts) (Telemann); *In einem kühlen Grunde* (Gluck); *Muss i' denn; Jägerlied; The Farmer's Boy; Every Year Brings Something New; The Lone Prairie; Trio* (Hook); *An Eriskay Love Lilt; Early One Morning.*

This represents the first release by the world-famed Trapp Family Singers in many years, except for two LP's devoted exclusively to Christmas numbers. This unique family (now all American citizens), led by its priest, Father Wasner, performs some folk songs and dances which have particularly attracted the concert audiences wherever it has appeared; it is a fine disc, and we enjoyed every minute of it.

Kodály: Psalmus Hungaricus, Op. 13. (Sung in English). William McAlpine (tenor) with the London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. One side, and **Kodály: Variations on "The Peacock."** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1020) \$3.98.

Solti and his forces perform the beautiful and exciting *Psalmus* extremely well, and London has captured the high-volumed choral passages with exceptional fidelity; we were greatly thrilled by this performance, it being infinitely superior to Rother's (*UR-URLP-7014, TNR Oct. '51). Solti is up against stiff competition in the *Peacock Variations*, for Dorati (TNR Oct. '54) has a superb version which remains our first choice.

Bruckner: Mass No. 2 in E minor. (Sung in Latin). Choir and Orchestra of the Hamburg State Opera conducted by Max Thurn. 1-12" disc in box (*T-LGX-66033) \$4.98.

Among Bruckner's Masses the *Mass in E minor* occupies a special position. "It stands alone," writes Rudolf Louis, "apart from the world, a pure church building. Its color is the white of the altar . . . its only ornament is the purity of style which lifts the soul in the *Missa Papae Marcelli*." Further, as Werner Wolff points out, the *Mass in E minor* proves its liturgical nature and purpose by the omission of the opening words *Gloria in excelsis* in the second section and of the *Credo in unum Deum* in the following part—those words are supposed to be pronounced by the officiating priest.

The style of the mass, then, is almost ascetic—not much of Bruckner's flowing imagination is in evidence. The work is mightily impressive, however, because

of the obvious sincerity of the man. The accompanying orchestra is confined to woodwinds and brass, lending a further air of remoteness to the music.

The performance here is a good one, one that does no violence to either the music or to its spirit. The choir and orchestra of the Hamburg State Opera are obviously at home with the music and play and sing with style. The tone of the chorus always falls pleasantly on the ear. Max Thurn's direction is sensitive and musicianly. W.

VOCAL

Hebrew High Holidays Liturgical Melodies. Dr. Hayim Harris (cantor), recorded directly from the service. 3-12" discs in album (*HARRIS LP-1) \$12.95.

CONTENTS: *Hineni Heoni Mimaas; Meloch; Hoshev Shvusenu; Shma Kolenu; Einei Khol; Unesaneh Tokeh; Yaaleh Veyovo; Utshuvo Utfilo; Adonoy Adonoy; Ato Vechartonu Mikol Hoamim; Ashrei* (Finale); *V'al Yedei* (Zichronoth); *Halben Chatoenu; "Uvchen" to "Yaale Veyovo."*

Not being an authority on this sort of music, we will quote from the English notes in this album (the notes are also printed in Yiddish and in Hebrew, as are the record labels, and the album is arranged "backwards," as Hebrew books are):

"These recordings were made during public services . . . (and are intended to show) the various instructive musical values (thereof).

"Most of the melodies in these records are presented not only for the listener's enjoyment. They represent a new system in synagogue song, and it is hoped that every melody may serve as a successful experiment in the field of Hebrew liturgy. Many cantors and musicians have endeavored to solve the problem of combining the old and the new modes of song. The old style is quite simple and musically poor, but it does contain the characteristic Hebrew quality and therefore reveals its identity with the Hebrew semitic-oriental strain. On the other hand, the new synagogue song is more or less modern and well-developed from the musical point of view, but the Hebrew tradition and its typical expressions are lacking. . . .

"The following songs are therefore presented because they embrace the qualities and characteristics of the old Hebrew song, whereas their musical rendition is in a modern form that may solve the problems mentioned above. These songs include the ancient and traditional motifs together with the modes and melodies used in the best known Jewish synagogues. The Hebrew semitic-oriental strain is well represented in most of these songs, and above all these songs are based on the accentuation motifs of the Bible; which were preserved because of their being associated with the Bible, therefore equally sanctified, and so became the only standard to identify Hebrew music. . . .

"These songs also serve to transmit emotions, devotions, attitudes and impressions during prayers, as well as the conflicts and struggles between good and evil. . ."

This album has been issued by Dr. Harris, and we understand that it has been acclaimed by many cantors and rabbis as a much-needed recording. If it is not available at your local dealer, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

Moussorgsky: (6) Songs. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: (8) Songs.** Nadezhda Oboukhova (mezzo-soprano); Serge Lemeshev (tenor); Boris Gmirya, Alexander Pirogov (baritones); and Mark Reizen (bass). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6023) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Trépak* (from "Songs and Dances of Death") (Gmirya); *Serenade* (from "Songs and Dances of Death") (Pirogov); *The Revel* (Pirogov); *The Goat* (Pirogov); *Kalistrat* (Pirogov); *Song of the Flea* (Reizen) (all by Moussorgsky). *The Soldier's Bride*, Op. 8, No. 4 (Oboukhova); *Thou My Beloved Harvest*, Op. 4, No. 5 (Oboukhova); *Like a Vision the Daydreams Have Vanished* (Oboukhova); *Spring Waters*, Op. 14, No. 11 (Lemeshev); *I Was at Her House*, Op. 14, No. 4 (Lemeshev); *The Pied Piper*, Op. 38, No. 4 (Lemeshev); *O Cease Thy Singing, Maiden Fair*, Op. 4, No. 4 (Gmirya); *Dear One, Do Not Leave*, Op. 4, No. 1 (Gmirya) (all by Rachmaninoff).

This is another of those records that appear to be "naturals," as it were: Russian songs, sung by native artists on their own soil. One would assume that these are authentic interpretations, with no language barriers to intervene. Such, however, is not the case. Dullness is the same the world over, regardless of on which side of the iron curtain it appears. Boris Gmirya, Alexander Pirogov, Mark Reizen, Nadezhda Oboukhova, and Serge Lemeshev hoot their way through this disc in dismal fashion and cover both music and poetry with a coating of the commonplace.

Vanguard has dressed up the original Russian tapes to no avail. The sound is hollow and lacking in any sort of brilliance. It is virtually impossible to find a good word for this collection of songs that could have been, with a little artistry on the part of the singers, a very fine sampling of Moussorgsky's and Rachmaninoff's work in this form. W.

Pergolesi: Salve Regina. And Bach: Cantata No. 53 ("Schlage doch, gewünschte Stunde"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 170** ("Vergnügte Ruh", beliebte Seelenlust"). Herta Glaz (mezzo-soprano) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3156) \$3.98.

Very little is known of Pergolesi's short life (he died at the age of 26 under "romantic" circumstances), and information concerning his compositions is also notable by its absence. The present work, a setting of the celebrated hymn *Salve Regina*, is probably the last of five that Pergolesi wrote and was composed a few months before his death. The edition

used here was prepared for Miss Glaz by the distinguished harpsichordist and musicologist, Yella Pessl. Like other music of Pergolesi's that is known to the general music lover, it is a tuneful work, occasionally sombre and fired with a certain melancholy. Miss Glaz, whose previous recordings for MGM have demonstrated her to be a mezzo-soprano of more than average vocal ability, sings the music with expressiveness, taste and feeling.

The two Bach cantatas have both been recorded before. It seems a shame to duplicate a portion of the LP catalog that is already crowded to the limit. Certainly for such a cantata as *Schlage doch* (which many authorities even doubt to be the work of Bach) one recording should be enough. *Vergnügte Ruh*, *beliebte Seelenlust* is a more ambitious work, dating from 1732.

Miss Glaz sings here, as elsewhere, with a colorful voice and a sure understanding of the texts. The accompaniments are deftly handled by the Guilet String Quartet and Herman Chassid (harpsichord) in the Pergolesi and first Bach work, while for the other cantata she is assisted by a chamber ensemble directed by Izler Soloman. Recorded sound is good—texts and translations are included. W.

Moans and Blues. Lizzie Miles (vocals) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*SOT-1182) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Memphis Blues*; *Can't Help Lovin' That Man of Mine*; *Jelly Roll*; *There'll Be Some Changes Made*; *Louisiana*; *Sugar Blues*; *Lazy River*; *Going Away to Wear You off My Mind*; *Mama's Lonesome for You*; *I Never Knew What the Blues Were*; *Papa Won't You Tell Me What You Done to Me*; *Basin Street*; *Animal Ball*; *Plain Ole Blues*; *When You're a Long, Long Way from Home*.

Last August we were introduced to Lizzie Miles, via discs (*SOT-1181, TNR Aug. '54); we were impressed, and lamented that the late Bessie Smith should have been recorded by Emory Cook. Here is a larger sampling of Miss Miles' big, rough voice; she will delight jazz collectors and hi-fi enthusiasts alike.

Songs by Father Sydney MacEwen. Rev. Sydney MacEwen (tenor) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3152) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Ireland my Home*; *I'm a Sentimental One*; *Road to the Isles*; *Mother Machree*; *Scotland the Brave*; *The Youth of the Heart* (orchestral accompaniment). *Westering Home* (with Gerald Moore, piano). *Bring Flowers of the Rarest*; *Mother of Christ* (with Charles Smart, organ). *Bonnie Strathyre* (piano acc.).

Father MacEwen is presently pastor of a Roman Catholic church at Lochgilphead, Argyll, Scotland; he has received special permission from the Church to make concert tours, having come to the U.S. in the fall of '54. The Father's specialty is folk songs of

Scotland and Ireland.

MGM, in its program notes, makes much of the fact that Father MacEwen has been called "the second McCormack." But the singing priest is more correct when he says "... but I couldn't lace the boots of John . . . compared to McCormack, I'm like an elephant wallowing in treacle." He really has a very pleasant voice; but a second McCormack? . . . well, that is rather unfair.

Dowland and his Contemporaries. Frederick Fuller (baritone) accompanied by Jose de Azpiazu (lute and guitar). 1-12" disc (*EMS-11) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Flow not so fast, ye fountains* (voc. & lute); *Sweet, stay awhile* (voc. & lute); *Fine knacks for ladies* (voc. & lute); *Pavan* (guitar); *Dowland's Ades* (guitar); *Queen Elizabeth's Galliard* (guitar); *Orlando Sleepth* (guitar); *Come Away* (voc. & lute) (Dowland); *Melancholy galliard* (guitar); *Greensleeves* (guitar); *Mrs. Vauxes' Gigge* (guitar); *My Lady Hunsdon's pufte* (guitar); *Have you seen but a white lily grow?* (voc. & lute); *Forlorne hope* (guitar); *Heartes ease* (guitar) (Anon.). *Go to bed, sweet muse* (voc. & lute) (Jones). *Sweet was the song* (voc. & lute); *On a time* (voc. & lute) (Attey). *When Laure smiles* (voc. & lute) (Rosseter). *What thing is love?* (voc. & lute) (Bartlett).

A very nice recital of 16th century English songs and music is offered this month by EMS. Many of the songs are familiar (*Fine Knacks for Ladies*, *Have You Seen But a White Lily Grow?*, *Greensleeves*), but many will not be. Mr. Fuller has a most pleasant voice, well suited to the songs he essays.

The words of each song are given on the jacket cover, plus a brief description of the instrumental numbers. Recommended to those making a study of music of this period; others will find the disc nice listening but perhaps too much "sameness" in the selections.

Marlene Dietrich at the Cafe de Paris. Marlene Dietrich (disease) with introduction by Noel Coward. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4975) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *La vie en rose*; *The Boys in the Backroom*; *Lazy Afternoon*; *Lola*; *Look Me Over Closely*; *Das Lied ist Aus*; *No Love, No Nothin'*; *The Laziest Gal in Town*; *Jonny*; *Lili Marlene*; *Falling in Love Again*.

Columbia properly realizes that Dietrich must be seen to be appreciated. It has placed a full-face portrait of her, in color, on the cover of the disc, and on the back shows a full-length picture of her wearing the fabulous gown she wore on opening night at the Cafe de Paris, London's most famous night club, when this recording was made. Milton Shulman said, of this gown: "It was transparent enough to make you think you were seeing everything and opaque enough to make you realize you were seeing nothing." Columbia has even scented the envelope with Lanvin

Arpège perfume—yes, really! It's all over our hands now; we hope our wife will believe us when we tell her where we were.

And there's a record inside, too! On it Dietrich sings (?), in her own way, eleven songs her audiences love, introducing each in her husky voice. Noel Coward's introduction sets the mood for the disc; now turn the lights low, fill the room with smoke, tinkle a few glasses, inhale this heady perfume, and there you are.

Mozart: (6) Concert Arias. Waldemar Kmentt (tenor) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3076) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Va, dal Furor Portata*, K. 21; *Si Mostra la Sorte*, K. 209; *Con Ossequio, con Rispetto*, K. 210; *Per Pietà, non Ricercate*, K. 420; *Se Al Labbro Mio non Credi*, K. 295; *Misero! O Sogno!*, K. 431.

There is some wonderful and virtually unknown Mozart in the so-called "concert arias" which, in reality, were largely written for certain singers to interpolate into other composer's operas. This practice, dreadful as it seems to us now, was a generally accepted procedure in those days and, since Mozart wrote some magnificent music for the purpose, one can only be glad. What is more, if there were a composer of Mozart's calibre alive today, one could think of many operas where his interpolations would be welcome!

This collection opens with an incredible work, *Va, dal Furor Portata*, K. 21, written when Mozart was nine years old. There is nothing the writer can say except "hear it"—the melodic invention, orchestration and style are as sure as those of a composer five times his age. The other five arias are also all fine examples of Mozart's *opera seria* style—abounding in exquisite melodies and always interesting musical development.

Waldemar Kmentt sings the music with a sense of fitness and style that could very well be the envy and despair of many tenors, some of whom are more gifted vocally. Herr Kmentt's voice is a manly tenor of good range and color. His sense of the inherent drama is well conveyed via his obviously understood and excellently enunciated Italian. Bernhard Paumgartner and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra supply accompaniments that are both elegant and dramatic.

There are excellent—even detailed—notes and the Italian texts of the arias. English translations are not given; but, in this case, it really does not matter; for the verses are the usual blood and thunder of *opera seria*. Fine recording, in addition to all the musical and literary excellencies of the disc, makes it a must for all Mozarteans and anyone interested in good music well sung.

W.

PIANO



Complete Piano Works of Mozart (Vols. I-VII). Lili Kraus (piano). 7-12" discs (*HS-HSL-121/7) \$5.95 each.

CONTENTS: Vol. I: *Allegro in G minor*, K. 312; *Sonata in B-flat*, K. 333; *Sonata in C*, K. 545; *Variations in E-flat* on "La Belle Française," K. 353.

Vol. II: *Sonata in E-flat*, K. 282; *Sonata in G*, K. 283; *Sonata in C*, K. 330; *Variations in F* on "Salve tu, Domine" by Paisiello, K. 398.

Vol. III: *Fantasy in C minor*, K. 396; *Sonata in F*, K. 332; *Sonata in D*, K. 576; (10) *Variations in A* on "Come un agnello," K. 460.

Vol. IV: *Fantasy in C minor*, K. 475; *Sonata in C minor*, K. 457; *Sonata in D*, K. 284.

Vol. V: (Not released at this writing).

Vol. VI: *Sonata in B-flat*, K. 281; *Sonata in D*, K. 311; *Fantasy in D minor*, K. 397; *Sonata in A*, K. 331 ("Alla Turca").

Vol. VII: *Sonata in C*, K. 279; *Sonata in F*, K. 280; *Rondo in A minor*, K. 511; *Sonata in B-flat*, K. 570.

Listed above are the contents of the first six (Vol. V not released yet) Volumes of Haydn Society's projected recording of everything Mozart ever wrote for piano, either solo or accompanied. Gieseeking has essayed the solo piano works on Angel (TNR Dec. '54) in a Limited Edition, and found favor in these columns. Lili Kraus is an artist of the first rank; Haydn Society's reproduction is as fine as you'll get these days; and though we doubt the commercial success of this project, we rather feel that if one wishes Mozart's complete piano works played by one artist, he'd look far to find a superior or more sympathetic pianist than Mme. Kraus.

Mompou Piano Pieces. Federico Mompou (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35147TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35147) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Suburbis No. 1* — El Carrer, El Guitarrista, i el Vell Cavall; *Scènes d'Enfants No. 5* — Jeunes Filles au Jardin; *Prelude No. 9*; *Prelude No. 10*; *Impressiones Intimas*—Canción y Danza No. 1; *Pajaro Triste*; *Secreto*; *Gitano*; *La Fuente y la Campana*; *Canción y Danza No. 8*; *Canción y Danza No. 7*; *El Lago*; *Canción y Danza No. 4*; *Canción y Danza No. 5*.

This fine LP disc will serve to introduce to most of us Federico Mompou (1893-) both as a composer and as an artist; and a welcome introduction it is. Composing mostly for his own instrument, he offers here some veritable gems for solo piano, full of French dreaminess but written with Latin precision; Mompou is a Catalan by birth.

Mompou's pieces are not programmatic; they are mood music. He is, by turns, mysterious, gay, dreamy, reflective, hopeful, morose, etc. He is an uncommon

artist, as well; he seems to infuse himself into his playing, giving the listener, as it were, a double dose of himself. One's comment, upon a single hearing of this disc, would be "pleasant;" repeated hearings reveal the esthetic nature of the composer-artist, gradually impressing the listener with the composer's greatness. Disclaiming the title "composer," Mompou has said: "I am not a musician, but I should very much like to be music." On this disc, he is.

Rubinstein Plays Grieg. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1872) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Ballade*, Op. 24; *Cradle Song*, Op. 68, No. 5; *Spring Dance*, Op. 47, No. 6; *Berceuse*, Op. 38, No. 1; *Folk Song*, Op. 38, No. 2; *Papillon*, Op. 43, No. 1; *Spring Dance*, Op. 38, No. 5; *Shepherd Boy*, Op. 54, No. 1; *Little Bird*, Op. 43, No. 4; *Folk Song*, Op. 12, No. 5; *Elfin Dance*, Op. 12, No. 4; *Album Leaf*, Op. 28, No. 4; *March of the Dwarfs*, Op. 54, No. 3.

These pieces need someone like Rubinstein to wring every last drop out of them. They are not great music, but Rubinstein never lets on that he knows this, and plays them for all they're worth, making a good suit out of common cloth.

VIOLIN



Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21. One side, and **Chausson: Poème, Op. 25.** And **Ravel: Tzigane.** Arthur Grumiaux (violin) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3082) \$3.98.

We already have two excellent recordings of the *Symphonie Espagnole*, but the present one is a real firecracker and will challenge both Heifetz (*V-LM-1782, TNR Mar. '54) and Campoli (*L-LL-763, TNR Nov. '53). Upon flipping this disc, we find Grumiaux challenging Francescatti (*C-ML-2194, TNR Nov. '51) and Heifetz (*V-LM-7017, TNR Dec. '53) in the delightful *Poème*; we find him not exactly defeated, either—a draw, we'll call it. The *Tzigane* makes an appropriate filler.

HARPSICHORD



Pedal Harpsichord. Bruce Prince-Joseph (pedal harpsichord). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1131) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Concerto No. 2 in A minor* (Vivaldi-Bach); *Sonata in C*, K. 545 (Mozart); *Prelude in G* ("Great") (Bach); *Bourée II* (from "English Suite II in A minor") (Bach).

Here is a most interesting little record, featuring Bruce Prince-Joseph playing the pedal harpsichord. The jacket notes inform us what this instrument is:

"The pedal harpsichord on this record is a rarity among rare instruments, reputedly the only one in the Western Hemisphere. Virile-voiced and capable of shattering climaxes, it is new experience in sound

... there is strong evidence that the great German 'organ' works were written for the pedal harpsichord ... Bach used (it) in his home for ... composing.

"The pedal harpsichord on this record (was) built ... by Hans Neupert ... in Bavaria. In size and length it compares with our modern concert grand." A photograph on the jacket shows how the pedals are affixed.

Bruce Prince-Joseph seems thoroughly familiar with the instrument as he essays the Mozart "18th Century Drawing Room" Sonata and other works. This is a musical novelty plus, the plus being well-recorded works of real musical value. Need we say more about the reproduction than that Emory Cook recorded it?



ORGAN

The Art of the Organ. E. Power Biggs, playing twenty historic European organs. 2-12" discs in box (*C-SL-219) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: *Fanfare in C* (Purcell; organ at Westminster Abbey); *Toccata in A minor* (Sweelinck; organ at Grote of St. Jacobskerk, Hague); *Variations on "Mein junges Leben hat ein end"* (Sweelinck; organ at Oude Kerk, Amsterdam); *Balletto del Granduca* (Sweelinck; organ at Grote of Pieterskerk, Leiden); *Variations on "Under der Linden grüne"* (Sweelinck; organ at Kruiskerk, Amstelveen); *Toccata in D minor* (Sweelinck; organ at Benediktiner-abeite, Weingarten); *Variations from "Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan"* (Pachelbel; organ at Abteikirche, Amorbach); *Chorale Prelude: "Vom Himmel hoch, da komm' ich her"* (Pachelbel; organ at St. Lorenz-kirche, Nürnberg); *Toccata in C* (Pachelbel; organ at Heiliggeistkirche, Heidelberg); *Toccata in E minor* (Pachelbel; organ at Steinkirche, Steinkirchen); *Chorale Prelude: "Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"* (Pachelbel; organ at Neuenfelde Kirche, Neuenfelde); *Prelude in F* (Buxtehude; organ at St. Jacobi-Kirche, Lübeck); *Fugue in F* (Buxtehude; organ of the Danish State Radio, Copenhagen); *Prelude, Fugue and Chaconne in C* and *Partita: "Auf meinen lieben Gott"* (Buxtehude; organ at Oskarskyrkan, Stockholm); *Prelude and Fugue in F* (Buxtehude; organ at Monastery Church, Sorø); *Prelude and Fugue in G* (Buxtehude; organ at Nidarosdomen, Trondheim); (2) *Chorale Preludes* (Buxtehude; organ at Frederiksborg, Slotkirke, Hillerød); *Fugue in C* (Buxtehude; organ at Drottningholm Castle Chapel, Sweden); *Chaconne in D minor* (Buxtehude; organ at Leufsta Bruk, Sweden); *Toccata in D minor* (Bach; organ at Royal Festival Hall, London).

The interested reader will, by this point, have read the above heading carefully; if he has not, we suggest going over it slowly again, for little we can say can adequately convey what this superlative set has to offer. This is a collection of recordings of European organs such as many of us have taken years to accumulate, and it beats any collection your reviewer ever saw, heard of, or dreamed about. Furthermore,

these organs are all recorded at the same dynamic level, with the same characteristics, etc., which means there is no need to fuss with tone controls as this parade of renowned instruments pours forth its glorious sounds.

Rather than comment on the music and its performances, which are uniformly excellent, as is the remarkable reproduction, we would rather indicate what else this set has in store for the organ fan. The discs are in cardboard jackets, which are in turn housed in a box-type container. On the back of the container is a complete stoplist of every one of the organs! On each of the jackets, in large type, is the record number, side number, and the program played with the organs named on which the piece is being played. There is also a large (12" x 12") booklet of sixteen pages with a superb set of pictures, notes on the music, and an article by Edward Tatnall Canby. Any organist or lover of good organ music who can resist this album has indeed a stronger will than we.

This is not the place to argue about the pipings of baroque organs versus our modern instruments. It is rather the place to sit back and marvel at the accomplishments of organ builders of a bygone era, whose works have miraculously been allowed to be preserved for us to hear today. The atmosphere of these instruments in their own setting is conveyed to us with utter magic. It is almost an anachronism that modern high fidelity recording can bring us the fragile beauty and the thrilling grandeur and majesty of these remarkable organs of several centuries ago (as well as a sampling of some modern European organs). We are indebted to E. Power Biggs and Columbia for this imaginative and completely successful collection of organ music.

S.



DICTION

Anthology of Negro Poets. Edited by Arna Bon-temps. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-FP-91) \$6.45.

CONTENTS: *I Have Known Rivers, I Too* (Langston Hughes); *Long Gone, Ma Rainey* (Sterling Brown); *St. Isaac's Church, The Tropics in New York, If We Must Die* (Introduction), *If We Must Die* (Claude McKay); *Heritage* (Countee Cullen); *For My People, Old Molley Means, Kissie Lee, Stack-alee, John Henry* (Margaret Walker); *Kitchenette, Song of the Front Yard, The Preacher Ruminates, The Children of the Poor, Old Laughter, Beverly Hills Chicago* (Gwendolyn Brooks).

Poetry can be read to one's self, but we much prefer it read aloud; its power comes from the rhythm as much, we think, as from the thoughts expressed. The philosophies advanced by the Negro poets, reading their own works on this disc, will make a greater impression on the hearer than he would obtain from merely reading the printed words. However, we would wish that Folkways had obtained the services of a fine actor, preferably a Negro, to read the poems (particu-

larly in the case of Claude McKay and Countee Cul-
len, the latter having been recorded in the early '30's).

MISCELLANEOUS



Calypso by the Talbot Brothers (Vol. I). The Talbot Brothers. 1-10" disc (*AUDIO FIDELITY AFLP-902) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Santo; Mambo; Double Mambo; Santo (Bembe); Nanigo; Rhumba Columbia; Afro Cubano; Drum Dance; Rhumba; Rhumba Son; Burandanga; Conga.*

Calypso by the Talbot Brothers (Vol. II). The Talbot Brothers. 1-10" disc (*AUDIO FIDELITY AFLP-903) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Last Train; You Don't Need Glasses To Sea; Ebb Tide; Pound Your Plantain in the Mortar; Goombay Dance; Bachelor Life; I Talk to the Trees; Fast Company.*

A lot of our readers will be glad to know of these discs, and frankly it is a relief to be able to announce their availability. We have received an inordinately large number of inquiries of late asking where records by the Talbot Brothers could be purchased. Not having been up on such things, we had never heard of them, and we are afraid we were of little help. These six boys, natives of Bermuda, have evidently made a name for themselves, at least among persons who have seen them perform.

Guitar Recital. Andrés Segovia (guitar). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9751) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Prelude, Gavotte, Chaconne, Loure (Bach); Minuet in C, Andantino, Minuet in D (Sors); Canzonetta (Mendelssohn); Prelude (Villa-Lobos); Sarabanda (Rodrigo).*

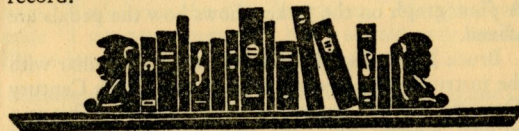
Another fine disc by the veritable inventor of the classical guitar which will be snapped up quickly by his host of admirers.

Recorder and Harpsichord Recital (Vol. III). Carl Dolmetsch (recorder) and Joseph Saxby (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1026) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Partita No. 2 in G (Telemann); Sonata No. 5 in G minor, Op. 1 (Senallie); Greensleeves to a Ground (Anon.); Sonata No. 4 in F (Pepusch); Prelude in D (Matteis); Allemande and Corrente in G minor (Anon.); (2) Movements from Suite in G (Caix d'Hervelois); Sonata No. 7 in C (Handel); (4) Pieces (Lawes—arr. Dolmetsch).*

In October '49 and January '53 London issued 10-inch LP's of Dolmetsch and Saxby in Recorder and Harpsichord recitals. Each was more successful than we had thought they would be, at the time,

and we are glad to report that London has now given us a larger (12-inch) helping of this music of another day. None of the items on the present disc are on either of the other two, so owners of the previous ones need not hesitate to get the new record.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
Ø indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

WHAT with over 200 brands of LP records now on the market, a new make has many obstacles to overcome in seeking public acceptance. It is becoming more and more difficult to find new and worthwhile things to record or to issue the definitive recording of an already-issued work. The recent lowering of LP prices to about \$3.98 has made competition on a price basis harder.

However, a new manufacturer, Kingsway, in placing its LP discs on the market, has realized that if it could bring its releases to the attention of those several leading record collectors in each community whose opinions are valued by other record buyers in that community, a demand would be created thereby. Kingsway has further recognized that a quick way of accomplishing this is to make a special introductory offer to readers of THE NEW RECORDS, on whose mailing list one will find a high percentage of the important record collectors throughout the Free World. Accordingly, we are happy to extend to our readers, until 31 July 1955, the opportunity to purchase any LP disc in the Kingsway catalog at the special price of \$1.98.

Readers will find three Kingsway records covered in this month's issue, under the headings of ORCHESTRA, CONCERTO and CHORAL; the records receive, in the main, favorable reviews. We have secured a supply of Kingsway catalogs; we shall be happy to send one without charge to any reader requesting it. We are, naturally, proud (but not surprised) at the high opinion Kingsway has of our readers, and we are most happy to be in a position to cooperate in making this special offer. At \$2.98 Kingsway records would be bargains, indeed; but by making this special introductory offer of \$1.98 to readers of THE NEW RECORDS, Kingsway feels that it may more quickly launch its line.

Persons desiring to order Kingsway records under the terms of this special offer should address their orders to the publisher of THE NEW RECORDS: H. Royer Smith Co., 10th & Walnut Streets, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning May 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78.
NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini, with George Crook (organ) and Joseph Kahn (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1874) \$3.98.

Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78.
Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo, with Feike Asma (organ). 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3077) \$3.98.

Performances of Saint-Saëns' *Third Symphony* are not too frequent, because of the forces required; but it is a surprisingly popular work with lovers of classical music, and the Münch-New York Philharmonic Symphony recording (*C-ML-4120) has been consistently a good seller since its release. The Münch recording is a fine one and has been accepted also as a high fidelity plum because of the dynamic level and breadth of its reproduction. With two new versions appearing, those who do not own this wonderful work now have a choice of three, numerically—two, as far as quality is concerned; and those who own the Münch disc are advised at least to hear the new Toscanini disc, even if they do not care to purchase it. For Toscanini brings to this work a performance

that most of us never dreamed about; it is easily the finest we ever heard or ever heard about, and could be the best this work ever had in its existence.

To find out how searching and eloquent Toscanini is, you need but hear the Otterloo hash of the same work. Toscanini's tempi are prevailingly gentle and controlled, never rushed, and always exactly right. The clarity which he brings to the score is not only characteristic of nearly all his work, but it does wonders for this particular score. The Saint-Saëns *Third* is not the diffuse pastiche that it often appears to be, not in the Toscanini reading. It emerges with a dignity and loftiness that raises it to new heights in the symphonic repertoire. This is truly one of Toscanini's masterpieces on records—it is a masterpiece because he reveals what a masterpiece Saint-Saëns wrote. The NBC Orchestra plays with rare beauty and eloquence, notably in the Adagio section of the first movement; and its accuracy is indeed appreciated in this work. The reproduction is magnificent in quality and in balance, despite the fact that it is taken from a 1952 broadcast. We liked this so much we even forgave the coughs and other extraneous noises present. As we have often claimed, live performances have an inspiration not present in studio sessions, so we will take the audience's noises, for it is they who also provided the inspiration.

The Münch recording must take second place, and Otterloo places last, a situation which will probably be true if three more versions are issued, for the Otterloo reading is lamentable in every respect. It is rushed, mushed, hashed, frantic and ragged, and practically degrading to the music. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("Great"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9746) \$3.98.

Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 88 in G.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9767) \$3.98.

Those who have been diligent readers of THE NEW RECORDS will be able to see at a glance that Decca has taken the Schubert No. 9, which previously was issued (TNR Mar. '53) on three LP sides, and re-mastered it to fit on two LP sides. The previous fourth side filler, Haydn's No. 88 is now paired with a new issue, the Schumann No. 4. A note on each of the jackets explains that "In order to preserve the highest standard of high fidelity recording, worthy of these interpretations, it has been necessary to interrupt the continuity of the fourth movement of the Schumann symphony (and the second movement of the Schubert symphony). We believe that collectors will prefer this slight inconvenience to any impairment of the over-all sound quality of the recording." This was a wise procedure which we must accept, and can only congratulate Decca for choosing logical places to break the music. Decca has succeeded in

maintaining an admirable quality of reproduction, and while it does not append its hi-fi label to the Schubert No. 9, the quality of sound is excellent.

We had high praise for the Furtwängler reading of the great Schubert symphony when first reviewed in these columns, and subsequent issues have found us referring to Furtwängler's reading as just about ideal and our general preference. Now that it is available in the more convenient and more economical form of a single disc, it bears our highest recommendation. No conductor ever did greater justice to this magnificent score. We also liked this conductor's performance of the Haydn symphony, as mentioned when the Schubert review appeared.

With the Schumann *Fourth* we come to the old problem (for record reviewers) of comparison with other recent issues of the work which are excellent readings. Paray and the Detroit Symphony (*ME-MG-50036) have given this work a wonderfully vigorous performance which appealed to us. After hearing Furtwängler, one feels quite disinclined to argue about his reading, for it is so beautiful, so warmly felt, so convincingly set forth, that it just has to be accepted as a fine reading. No conductor could ever turn a phrase more gracefully than Furtwängler, and none ever had such fine gradations of volume and such delicate shading. And these assets are on display numerous times during the performance of the Schumann symphony. This is truly a memorable reading which many persons will treasure for a long time. The reproduction is splendid—rich and mellow. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat. Three sides, and **Weber: Symphony No. 1 in C.** Leipzig Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Gerhard Pflüger. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-239) \$7.96.

Brucknerites have been well served with the issuance of this set, for it presents the first high fidelity LP of this great and noble symphony, the only previous LP dating from pre-hi-fi days. And the cause for rejoicing, fortunately, need not stop with the quality of reproduction, for the performance is a beauty. The Leipzig Philharmonic plays with inspiration as well as technical polish of a high order—far higher than some recent examples which have appeared from neighboring orchestras in that part of the world. This group has a unity and an accuracy that are necessary to essay a Bruckner symphony, and Gerhard Pflüger is apparently the man to call forth its best efforts. His reading of the long and difficult Bruckner symphony shows him to be admirably suited for the task. One senses from the beginning that here is a worthy performance of Bruckner, and as the work unfolds, this impression is maintained in a gratifying manner. Even the brasses hold up surprisingly well at the end of the fourth movement. The string playing in this long fourth movement has many moments of exceptional beauty. Pflüger does not drive the music too hard, keeping it rather lighter than usual in many sections, which makes the climaxes all the

more compelling. This is a performance to be admired in many respects, and we believe most lovers of the Bruckner symphonies will find it a rewarding experience. We thought the reproduction excellent, with unusual clarity, good texture, and nice perspective.

Weber's *Symphony No. 1* is heard for the first time on discs in a sparkling performance most becoming to the light and youthful nature of the music. It is no earth-shaking giant as music, but it has a lot of tuneful measures that are just as pleasing as many of the overtures and concert pieces we always enjoy. It is a highly acceptable bonus in this album, and again one cannot help admiring the deft performance it receives. S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3098) \$3.98.

Schumann: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 97 ("Rhenish"). Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Carlo Zecchi. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3092) \$3.98.

The last time we reviewed a Brahms *Second*, if memory serves, it was by Ormandy and the Philadelphians (*C-ML-4827), and we were enthusiastic to the point of claiming it the best on LP. It still is.

After hearing van Beinum do this work, we put it aside, picking it up a week later for another try. This time it sounded better, but still did not convince us. There is something about this performance that suggests meddling, tinkering, seeking that which is not there, or generally doing everything but creating the atmosphere which Brahms provided. There is the usual argument about how much tragedy is in this work versus how much of its pastoral nature is to be stressed. To us, Brahms settled the matter clearly by the lucid orchestration and obvious pastoral touches throughout, notably in the second movement. Commentators have always acknowledged its pastoral content, and Sir Thomas Beecham's old recording displayed this work in all its pastoral beauty. Van Beinum does little to give this work a reading based on pastoral ideas. He is too concerned with big effects, and where there is a lack of drama he endeavors to supply it. The playing of the orchestra is admittedly good, but the direction is misguided in our opinion. Of the several versions featuring modern reproduction, Ormandy still gives the best all around performance, as does also his excellent orchestra. The present disc is doubly-enclosed in jackets which have some fine photographs and interesting notes.

Carlo Zecchi's reading of the lovely Schumann "Rhenish" Symphony is not even in the same league with the recently admired performance by Carl Schuricht (*L-LL-1037). From the opening bars Zecchi presents a succession of disconnected phrases which do not hang together and add up to nothing by the end of the work. Even the renowned Concertgebouw fails to play well under this impossible

direction. Reproduction of both these discs is good, plenty brilliant, but capable of being tone controlled. S.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly (orchestral synthesis). Rome Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pietro Argento. 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-231) \$2.98.

(NOTE: See editorial for special introductory offer.)

Operatic overtures have been extremely popular almost since the inception of recorded music, but only lately, it seems, has attention been brought to arranging an operatic score for orchestra only. Kostelanetz and Stokowski have been popular for this and, particularly in the case of the former, his "operas for orchestra" have been among the best-selling classical discs.

It is only natural, then, in view of the extreme popularity of this sort of thing, that Kingsway would offer the complete score of *Madama Butterfly* arranged for orchestra. Its lovely melodies could well have been written for instrumental performances; one doesn't miss the words. Pietro Argento, one of Italy's most brilliant young conductors, leads the Symphony Orchestra of Rome through this lush score in a manner sure to please, and we have no doubt that persons interested will find this disc quite to their liking. Reproduction is excellent.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Hamburg Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc in box (*T-LGX-66031) \$4.98.

Tchaikovsky: Manfred, Op. 58. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35167TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35167) \$4.98.

Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 1 in D, Op. 43. One side, and Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B minor. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4966) \$3.98.

Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt has nothing new to say about the oft-recorded *Pathétique*, and does not say anything that has not already been said a lot better. Ormandy and the Philadelphians still lead the field (*C-ML-4544) and Steinberg is another excellent choice (many prefer this version above all others), and Kubelik and several others all have the edge over this new version. Telefunken's reproduction is rather hollow, boxy and unresonant in sound; nothing about this version indicates a recommendation.

Tchaikovsky's *Manfred*, variously called a symphony and a symphonic poem, is a four movement work based on episodes from Byron's dramatic poem, "Manfred." Each of the four movements is headed with a passage describing in words what is about to be elaborated in music. The first movement opens

with the significant "Manfred" theme that will appear many times throughout the symphony. The only other version to give the present one competition is by Toscanini (*V-LM-1037), and that one is competition indeed. Those who know and appreciate this score will do well to hear both discs, for Kletzki turns in a remarkably good performance, beautifully played by the expert Philharmonia Orchestra and recorded with richness and depth by Angel. This is not an easy choice, nor one to be tossed off without careful consideration. The over-all appeal of Kletzki, including the reproduction, will probably be the choice of most persons.

Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic come up with a winning disc in the performance of the Borodin *Second Symphony*, a work for which this conductor has an especial affinity. The charming *Suite No. 1*, reminiscent of Tchaikovsky's ballet suites, is an unhackneyed coupling. The suite as here recorded omits the third section *Intermezzo*, but the other five movements are present and played with sparkle. Both sides feature superb reproduction, a fact which puts Borodin's busy, bustling, and spirited symphony in a preferred position among the several other recordings. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 100 in G ("Military"). New Orchestral Society of Boston conducted by Willis Page. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1069) \$4.

Debussy: (2) Nocturnes ("Nuages," "Fetes"). One side, and Debussy: *Prelude a l'Après-midi d'un Faune*. New Orchestral Society of Boston conducted by Willis Page. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1063) \$4.

Haydn: Symphony No. 100 in G, Op. 90 ("Military"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 102 in B-flat, Op. 98, No. 2.** London Philharmonic Orchestra by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1043) \$3.98.

We have previously (TNR Aug. '54) expressed wonder and admiration for Emory Cook and commented upon his pre-eminence in the recording world; it seems that he has, almost in spite of himself, built up quite a following by recording odd (!) sounds and a motley collection of musicians. His latest "hit," *Burlesque Uncensored* (*SOT-1071, TNR Jan. '55), has been selling out of all proportion to its musical worth; and, from what we hear, the persons who have bought it are not sorry.

But if Mr. Cook adds to his fame by recording *Sea Noises*, *Rail Dynamics* and the like, he subtracts from it by attempting to compete with the majors (and many other independents) in issuing recordings of very popular classical works. One couldn't say that the Haydn and Debussy discs above are poor; but they require something more than hi-fi recording, and Willis Page doesn't have it.

We understand that someone has written to *Sounds of Our Times* suggesting a recording of a caterpillar backing into a wet sponge. This would probably be

pretty difficult; but what about a recording of *Sounds at the Complaint Desk in a Department Store?* Or *Sounds of Our Wife's Bridge Club?* There's a couple you don't have yet, Emory!

Solti does right well with the brace of Haydn Symphonies he offers this month; you will see what we mean if you compare the Page version of the "Military" to Solti's; but Solti does not erase our excitement at hearing Scherchen's (*WEST-WL-5045).

Showpieces for Orchestra (Vol. I). Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9727) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Prince Igor*—Polovtsian Dances (Borodin); *Caucasian Sketches*, Op. 10 (Ippolitov-Ivanov); *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A*, Op. 11 (Enesco).

Showpieces for Orchestra (Vol. III). RIAS Symphony Orchestra (Berlin) and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9738) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Ouverture Solennelle "1812,"* Op. 49 (Tchaikovsky); *La Forza del Destino*—Overture (Verdi); *La Traviata*—Preludes to Acts I & III (Verdi); *Radetzky March* (Strauss); *Ma Vlast*—From Bohemia's Woods and Fields (Smetana).

Pop Concert Favorites (Vol. I). MGM Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3136) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Fantasia Mexicana* (Copland); *Galloping Comedians* (Kabalevsky); *Gaité Parisienne*—Can Can (Offenbach); *Gayne*—Sabre Dance (Khat-chaturian); *Sicilian Tarantella* (Trad.); *Hungarian Dance No. 17* (Brahms); *La Vida Breve*—Danza Espanola (Falla); *Banjo and Fiddle* (Kroll); *Mexican Hat Dance* (Thomas); *March of the Dwarfs* (Grieg); *Schwanda*—Bohemian Polka (Weinberger).

One of the reasons for the great popularity of such potpourris as are listed above is the great interest in hi-fi rigs currently extant. The desire to assemble a phonograph which will reproduce as close to the original sound as possible has bitten many more persons than there are record collectors; and after one of these chaps gets his instrument all set to go, what's he going to play on it? He'll get *Ionization* (*EMS-401) and *Music of Bali* (*C-ML-4618) and a few such demonstrators; but surely he'll tire of this stuff, so he looks either for Mantovani, Kostelanetz or else discs like these—pleasant listening, easy-to-grasp music in brilliant high fidelity sound.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43. Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1084) \$2.98.

In April "S," in reviewing Stokowski's recent recording of the Sibelius *Second*, suggested that those wishing a romantic interpretation choose Stokowski's (*V-LM-1854), while the "dyed-in-the-wool" Sibelius fans will probably stay with Anthony Collins (*L-LL-

822). It is not at all likely that the present little Bluebird disc will sway either camp; but for those wishing a good, straightforward reading of this rugged perennial at a saving of one dollar, Barbirolli will fill the bill.

Adam: Giselle (complete ballet). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8306) \$4.98.

Bizet: Carmen Suite No. 1. And Bizet: Overture Patrie, Op. 19. L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. One side, and

Albéniz: Iberia. L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Eduardo Toldra. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3068) \$3.98.

Famous French Opera Overtures. L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3079) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Overture to *Phèdre* (Massenet); *La Princesse jaune* (Saint-Saëns); *Le Calife de Bagdad* (Boieldieu); *Carmen* (Bizet); *Faust* (Gounod); *Mignon* (Thomas); *La Dame blanche* (Boieldieu).

Opera Intermezzi. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35207TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35207) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: Intermezzi from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni); *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo); *Háry János* (Koldály); *Manon Lescaut* (Act III) (Puccini); *Goyescas* (Granados); *L'Amico Fritz* (Act III) (Mascagni). *Tales of Hoffmann*—Barcarolle (Offenbach); *Carmen*—Entr'acte (Act IV) (Bizet); *Thais*—Meditation (Massenet); *Khovantchina*—Entr'acte (Act IV) (Moussorgsky); *La Traviata*—Prelude (Act III) (Verdi).

Mendelssohn Overtures. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1048) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Hebrides, Op. 26*; *Fair Melusina, Op. 32*; *Ruy Blas, Op. 95*; *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage, Op. 27*.

Walton Selections. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1165) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Portsmouth Point Overture*; *Siesta*; *Scapino—Overture*; *The Wise Virgins* (Ballet Suite).

As the weather gets warmer we find the publishers of records issuing great quantities of lighter music for summertime listening. Here are six discs containing delightful music that anyone may enjoy, performed as well as one might wish, with superb reproduction.

Scriabin: The Divine Poem. One side, and **Scriabin: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 43.** State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Nikolai Golovanov. 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-3003) \$5.95.

The mystic, Scriabin, may not be too well known

to you; his music is thought hard to understand, but there is a small cult of his admirers who are always on the lookout for a new recording of one of his works. *The Divine Poem* is the first part of a projected cycle which included *Poème d'Extase* (TNR July '53, Nov. '53 & Feb. '54), *Poem of Fire* (TNR Nov. '53) and was to have concluded with a poem entitled *Mysterium*, but this last was never completed.

Golovanov and his forces seem to do justice to this difficult score. We would wish the sound to be a little better; it is good for Russian tapes, but it is not up to good American or Western Europe jobs. Scriabinites may now complete the cycle, insofar as it was written.

Gould: Dance Variations. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski, with Whittemore and Lowe (duo-pianists). One side, and **Menotti: Sebastian Ballet Suite.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1858) \$3.98.

A first recording of Gould's *Dance Variations* greets us this month; Menotti's *Sebastian* has been issued previously on a 10-inch Columbia. Both composers are well known and are certainly among the most important American musicians; it is therefore necessary to state only that Stokowski (aided and abetted in the *Dance Variations* by Whittemore and Lowe) makes these works as inviting as any conductor could.

The Family All Together. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1879) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Porgy and Bess* (Synthesis) (Gershwin); *Pop Goes the Weasel*; *Clair de lune* (Debussy); *Prelude in C-sharp minor* (Rachmaninoff); *In a Clock Store* (Orth); *Bolero* (Ravel); *The Glow Worm Turns* (Lincke—arr. Bodge); *A Hunt in the Black Forest* (Voelcker); *Intermezzo* (from the film) (Henning); *Warsaw Concerto* (Adinsel, with Litwin, piano).

Invitation to the Dance. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4957) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Invitation to the Dance, Op. 65* (Weber); *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A, Op. 11* (Enesco); *Stone Flower—Wedding Suite, Op. 126* (Prokofiev).

Two more discs by the two conductors who have probably done more to popularize classical music in America than any other; these records should quickly find their way to the best-sellers list.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 1 in C, Op. 21.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3095) \$3.98.

Gentle reader, you now have seven choices of a

recording of Beethoven's *First* by a front-rank company and about thirteen of the *Eighth*; five companies have issued discs with the identical pairing (i.e., *First* and *Eighth*). Epic's sound is mighty fine, and we can find nothing wrong with the interpretations; but neither can we find anything worthy of especial note to recommend this disc above any of the others.

Handel: Water Music (complete). Hewitt Orchestra conducted by Maurice Hewitt. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-107) \$5.95.

Handel: Water Music (complete). Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1128) \$3.98.

Two more versions of the complete *Water Music* this month, neither of which comes up to the magnificent Decca version (*D-DL-9594, TNR July '52) by Fritz Lehmann. Hewitt's is good—very good—and our criticism may not be valid; but we have called attention before to his habit of playing the music to show its parts rather than presenting a composite work; you may prefer this treatment, and if you do, Hewitt will be your choice. Neel is most arbitrary with tempi, possibly striving for effect; but Handel wrote all the "effects" one needs—this music stands on its own. Bales (*WCFM-LP-2, TNR Feb. '51) is our second choice after Lehmann.

Saint-Saëns: Le Carnaval des Animaux. Geza Anda and Bela Siki (pianists) with the Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. One side, and **Britten: Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34**. Peter Pears (narrator) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35135TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35135) \$4.98.

So far as the Saint-Saëns goes, we will still take the Coward-Kostelanetz version for the priceless verses of Ogden Nash (*C-ML-4907); but if the verses annoy you, you'll not find a better recording than either the present version or Slatkin's (*CL-P-8270, TNR Oct. '54). Markevitch and Pears do very well with the *Young Person's Guide*; and if this is the side that interests you, you'll save \$1.50 by buying the "Thrifty Pack"; the notes add little to what Mr. Pears says, in clipped English, on the disc.

R. Strauss: Symphony for Wind Instruments, Op. Posth. London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9761) \$3.98.

R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28. One side, and **R. Strauss: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24.** Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8291) \$4.98.

The only other LP recording of the *Symphony for*

Winds was issued about a year ago (*MGM-E-3097, TNR Apr. '54), and we'll say that two good discs of this work should be sufficient. It is not, as we have said, a symphony, this tag having been hung on the work by the publisher (Strauss called it a *Sonatina*).

We can see no need for another *Till Eulenspiegel* nor for another *Death and Transfiguration*, these numbers being well represented in the LP catalogs already; and we wouldn't pay a dollar extra for the present disc when a half-dozen other versions of equal or superior merit are available at \$3.98; Reiner (*V-LM-1180) has the same coupling.

Berlioz: Benvenuto Cellini—Overture. One side, and **Berlioz: Beatrice and Benedict—Overture.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Robert Denzler. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9143) \$2.98.

Liszt: Mephisto Waltz No. 1. One side, and **Liszt: Prometheus.** L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9153) \$2.98.

Except for Liszt's tone poem *Prometheus*, all of the works listed above have previous LP recordings; nevertheless we doubt that any other would be preferred to these. And we'd like to mention, in passing, that if you have not as yet investigated Berlioz as a composer, sample this *Overture to Benvenuto Cellini*; here is beautiful melody on top of beautiful melody—a charming little jewel you'll play over and over.

Music of Johann and Josef Strauss. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-1028/9) \$7.96.

CONTENTS: *Blue Danube*; *Tales of the Vienna Woods*; *Die Fledermaus*—Overture; *Artist's Life*; *Voices of Spring*; *Gypsy Baron*—Overture; *Morning Papers*; *Bei uns z'haus*; *Village Swallows*; *Music of the Spheres*; *Mein Lebenslauf ist Lieb und Lust*.

London has collected some of the late Clemens Krauss' best interpretations of Johann and Josef Strauss works and issued them in this two-record set. All of the numbers on *Music of Johann Strauss* (*L-LL-454) plus selected pieces from each of the three Vienna Philharmonic New Year Concerts (*L-LL-484, 683 & 970) will be found. The late maestro at his very best.

Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). And **Mozart: Serenade No. 6 in D, K. 239** ("Serenata Notturna"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 622.** Richard Schönhöfer (clarinet) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3069) \$3.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

CONCERTO



Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D, Op. 35. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. One side, and **Sinding: Suite in A minor, Op. 10.** And **Ravel: Tzigane.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1832) \$3.98. (TNR Jan. '51).

Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D, Op. 35. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64.** Zino Francescatti (violin) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4965) \$4.98.

We assume the Heifetz recording to be the same one as issued four years ago (TNR, January 1951), which at that time was issued on a 12" disc, spread over two sides with no coupling. It now appears on one 12" side, and it is the couplings which make the disc attractive. At the time of its issue, we were not too impressed with the performance, and after hearing it again, we are still not convinced that it is a truly great reading of the Tchaikovsky concerto. The first movement is unnecessarily rushed and pushed around for the sake of getting somewhere fast. This reading suffers badly by comparison with Oistrakh, who can play a fiddle as accurately as Heifetz, but who makes better music while he is doing it. Christian Sinding is unknown as a composer, save for his *Rustle of Spring*, familiar to many budding pianists. The *Violin Suite*, here recorded for the first time, proves to be a felicitous work for the instrument; it is a strikingly difficult piece. Heifetz plays this music with a neatness, clarity and accuracy that virtually mock its difficulties, and fanciers of violin music will be thrilled with this relatively unknown work of the violin repertoire. Much the same can be said for the Heifetz treatment of Ravel's *Tzigane*, for which the word difficult is a generous understatement. Heifetz' technical wizardry knows no bounds, and this side of the disc is something to hear. The reproduction is excellent; the Tchaikovsky side is a bit pale by today's best standards, but it is quite serviceable for those who wish this reading.

When it comes to playing Tchaikovsky's *Violin Concerto* with gusto, Francescatti does not have to take a back seat to Heifetz. Francescatti loses no time from the moment his bow bites the string for the first note; but there is a heap more musical excitement and musical value in this performance than in the calculated Heifetz rendition. We really did not expect to listen to every note of this side, but it was so absorbing that we just went right along until the end. We still think Oistrakh has the best recording, but this Francescatti reading is good enough to make us think that it is practically a toss-up. Francescatti's

disc also offers a mighty attractive coupling with a magnificent performance of the wonderful Mendelssohn *Concerto*—two of the greatest concertos on one disc. And to make it really attractive—the reproduction is sumptuous. S.

Bartók: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Ivry Gitlis (violin) with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Vienna) conducted by Jascha Horenstein. One and one-half sides, and **Bartók: Sonata for Violin Solo.** Ivry Gitlis (violin). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9020) \$5.95.

Henkemans: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Theo Olof (violin) with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. One side, and **Pijper: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.** Hans Henkemans (piano) with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. And **Pijper: (6) Epigrams.** Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3093) \$5.95.

Devotees of the late Béla Bartók will find a choice item in the Vox disc, for it couples his two violin works, the concerto and the unaccompanied sonata. Previous recordings of the concerto have had no couplings, previous versions of the sonata have had less desirable couplings than the present disc. Of course, the choice coupling matter is no bonus unless both works are given good performances—and we are pleased to state that Ivry Gitlis gives superlative readings of both works. Three other versions of the concerto and four other versions of the sonata do not surpass the performances which Gitlis turns in, nor the magnificent reproduction accorded by Vox. We were hardly prepared for such secure playing, such a well-knit conception of the work, and such fine accompaniment and reproduction as we heard in the concerto. This is truly a great performance of a modern masterpiece in the violin concerto literature. The enormously difficult sonata does not in the least appeal to us as music; but it must be reported that Gitlis makes sweeter music of it than some others have, mainly by being dead-accurate in the matter of pitch. In fact, we do not recall any violinist we have heard recently whose intonation is better than that of Gitlis. In difficult modern music, nothing helps putting it over better than correct intonation. From every angle this is a great record, which we recommend heartily to those interested in Bartók.

The first recordings of two Dutch works of the contemporary school prove to be interesting material. Pijper's *Piano Concerto* is played by one of his pupils, Henkemans, who is also the composer of the violin concerto on this disc. Pijper was the acknowledged leader of the modern Holland School and about the first Dutch composer since Sweelinck, two centuries ago, to draw international attention to that country's creative forces in music. This concerto is a compact seven movement work, played continuously in about

twenty minutes time. It is clever and good listening, and is well performed in this recording. Henkemans' violin concerto does not have as much immediate appeal; it appears to be more superficial. Theo Olof, to whom it is dedicated, plays it solidly. The Concertgebouw plays the *Six Epigrams*, written for their fortieth anniversary, with style and polish. S.

Beethoven: (5) Concertos for Piano and Orchestra.

Artur Schnabel (piano) with orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 5-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6700) \$19.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15* (London Symphony Orch., TNR June '33); *Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19* (London Philharmonic Orch., TNR Feb. '36); *Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37* (London Philharmonic Orch., TNR Nov. '33); *Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58* (London Philharmonic Orch., TNR Oct. '33); *Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor")* (London Symphony Orch., TNR Sept. '33); (15) *Variations in E-flat on a Theme from "Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus," Op. 35 ("Eroica Variations")*.

We sometimes muse to ourself about the probable thoughts of composers of a previous age, and we often wonder, for example, if Beethoven were alive today, whom would he have selected to perform his works? Of course, Herr Schnabel is now gone; but we suggest that Beethoven could have done far worse than to have put his imprimatur on the records that Schnabel has left us. Certainly any list of contemporary Beethoven interpreters would have Herr Schnabel among the top three.

So we must be most grateful to RCA Victor for having preserved these wonderful masters for us, so that we may enjoy the interpretations of one of the greatest Beethoven performers of our day. And you will be delightfully surprised at what Victor's engineers have done with these discs! The fidelity of reproduction, the comparative silence of the grooves and the quality of sound is surely amazing, indicating careful and loving processing by these electronic geniuses.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22.

One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 5 in F, Op. 103.** Orazio Frugoni (piano) with the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8410) \$5.95.

The two concertos recorded here are pivotal in Saint-Saëns' career, being the first and last of his major works respectively to hold the stage today. The *Second Concerto* was written in 1868, when the composer had just begun work on *Samson and Delilah*. In typical fashion he describes the occasion of its conception. One day Anton Rubinstein said to him, "I haven't yet led an orchestra in Paris—arrange a concert for me so I'll have a chance to wave the baton." Saint-Saëns continues, "We asked when the Salle Playel would be free—we had to wait three weeks. 'We have three weeks before us,' I told him.

'It's all right, I'll write a concerto for the occasion.' And I wrote the *Concerto in G minor*, which was thus introduced under illustrious patronage. Not having had time to work on it in terms of performance, I played it very badly, and except for the scherzo—which was an immediate success—it was poorly received. . . . Nevertheless, this concerto turned out to be his most popular; it is still the favored one today.

The *Fifth Concerto* was first performed by the composer in the Salle Playel on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of 1896, marking the fiftieth anniversary of Saint-Saëns' first public performance. The concerto, sometimes called "The Egyptian," was written that same year during the composer's sojourn at Luxor on the Nile. The second movement is an elaborate Oriental rhapsody, although it, and the work as a whole, are neither descriptive, pictorial nor programmatic.

The present disc is the only LP which couples two Saint-Saëns piano concertos. It is therefore worth while as subject matter, and happens also to be about the best recordings of Saint-Saëns piano concertos that we have heard. The performances of both works are beautifully done, accurate and stylish and very communicative. The reproduction is superb, with a notably good balance between piano and orchestra; the orchestra accompaniments are splendid. We enjoyed this disc ever so much more than the umpteenth version of Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Beethoven, and the other oft-recorded works, and recommend it heartily to those who like good piano concerto recordings.

S.

Dvorák: Concerto in B minor, Op. 104. André

Navarra (violoncello) with the New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Rudolf Schwarz. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8301) \$4.98.

Dvorák: Concerto in B minor, Op. 104. Pierre

Fournier (violoncello) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1106) \$3.98.

Writing a record review is not the same as writing a novel or writing a research paper; one hears a disc and, within the hour, one must decide (a) whether one likes it, (b) whether one will like it next week or next year and (c) why. We wonder how many critics, like ourself, sometimes re-read their old stuff and muse, "why it wasn't really *that* good," or "isn't it funny, I like it much better now."

However, we just re-read our review of the Dvorák *Concerto for 'Cello* by Janigro and Dixon (*WEST-WL-5225, TNR Jan. '54); there's one we still mean. We have the Westminster disc in our library and we still enjoy playing it; we still think it a great recording. We compared the two present versions with it. Navarra isn't in the same league (listen to the part just before the finale climax of the first movement for a quick comparison); he is too far from the microphone, which may account for the seeming weakness of his tone.

Fournier is better, as one might expect. In the slow parts he is unbeatable; but when things speed up, he gives himself away: he plays the notes but, to us, that is all. Recorded sound is as good as (but no better than) Westminster's.

Janigro-Dixon, therefore, is our first choice among hi-fi recordings, closely rivalling Casals (*V-LCT-1026) for all-time honors. J.

Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 622. Richard Schönhöfer (clarinet) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bernhard Paumgartner. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525** ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). And **Mozart: Serenade No. 6 in D, K. 239** ("Serenata Notturna"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3069) \$3.98.

Mozart: Concerto in A, K. 622. Gervase de Peyer (clarinet) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in B-flat, K. 191.** Henri Helaerts (bassoon) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*LL-1135) \$3.98.

There are entirely too many recordings of two of the works on the Epic LP listed above: Kell in the *Concerto* (*D-DL-9732) and Casals in the *Eine kleine* (*C-ML-4563) are demonstrably superior to most of the others, in our opinion. Moralt's very excellent *Serenata Notturna*, the second side filler, is not enough to sell us the disc.

We will recommend the London disc on the basis of the excellent *Bassoon Concerto*, the first one to make us consider replacing our Toscanini-Sharrow recording (*V-LM-1030), the reproduction of which is just beginning to show its age. The *Clarinet Concerto* is quite good but still does not displace Kell, as mentioned above.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D, Op. 35. Leonid Kogan (violin) with the State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Vassily V. Nebolsen. One and one-half sides, and **Tchaikovsky: Waltz Scherzo.** Leonid Kogan (violin) with the State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Alexander Gauk. 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-241) \$2.98.

(NOTE: See editorial for special introductory offer.)

Records of the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto* are coming thick and fast lately, but a good one is always welcome, and we must therefore welcome this disc. Leonid Kogan is a name new to us, but this young man of just thirty-one years may well be the best fiddler for his age appearing as a concert artist today. He has all the requisites of a virtuoso violinist: a broad, warm tone, an admirable style, and of course, a colossal technique. His playing is clearly that of a virtuoso violinist, and considering his years, there is an exceptional interpretive insight. In the tough

spots, if he is a shade less secure than Oistrakh, that is to be assumed; otherwise he would be as good as Oistrakh—and few are.

We were something less than charitable in an appraisal of the recent Elman version of this work, and we were mighty enthusiastic about the recent Oistrakh version (*D-DL-9755). Also at hand for review are new versions by Francescatti and by Heifetz. It would be difficult to recommend the present disc over those by the more distinguished and well established artists, and those who favor Oistrakh or Francescatti or some other luminary will do well to stick to their recordings. Those who are merely out for a good recording of the Tchaikovsky *Violin Concerto*, well played and well recorded, will find the present one about the best buy on the market, at the price asked.

The first recording of the *Waltz Scherzo*, by Tchaikovsky, is used as a second side filler, and it turns out to be a charming bit of music, which is most typical in its lovely melodic line—a melody that is at once appealing. The reproduction of this disc is uniformly good, with nice violin tone and a reasonable balance between soloist and orchestra. The quality is rather bright, but it can be tone controlled to a pleasant mellowness; the range is remarkable. S.

17th and 18th Century Italian Music. Società Corelli. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1880) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto in E for Violin and Strings* ("Il Riposo") (Vivaldi); *La Follia* (Corelli); *Concerto a Quattro in D, No. 2* (Galuppi); *Concerto in D, Op. 11, No. 8* (Bonporti).

More graceful Italian melodies by the Società Corelli, whose first disc (*V-LM-1767) was welcomed when it appeared (TNR June '53).

CHAMBER MUSIC



Hindemith: Trio No. 1, Op. 24 (1924). One side, and **Hindemith: Trio No. 2 (1933).** Jean Pougnet (violin), Frederick Riddle (viola) and Anthony Pini (violinello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5299) \$5.95.

Hindemith: Sonata for Trumpet and Piano (1939). Alex Wilson (trumpet) and Theodore Lettvin (piano). One side, and **Hindemith: Sonata for Bassoon and Piano (1938).** Bernard Garfield (bassoon) and Theodore Lettvin (piano). And **Hindemith: Sonata for Trombone and Piano (1941).** Roger Smith (trombone) and Theodore Lettvin (piano). 1-12" disc (*EMS-4) \$5.95.

Five chamber works by Paul Hindemith appear this month for the first time on LP. In 1926 Alfred Einstein characterized Hindemith as "simply a musician who produces music as a tree bears fruit, without further philosophic purpose." This is hard to believe when listening to the *Trios*; they do not sound as though they were "tossed off," at any rate. . . . The

Sonatas for Trumpet, for Bassoon and for Trombone are horses of quite a different color; they seem to be contrived music, written solely to produce unusual effects; if any of them has a message, it completely eluded us.

Beethoven: (5) String Quartets. Hungarian Quartet. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35109/11 TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3513C) \$14.98.

Volume II of Angel's entry into the Beethoven Quartet Sweepstakes (or should we call it "Handicap"?) is as good as Volume I (TNR Feb. '55), but no better. It contains miniature scores of each of the works, which works are the same as those in Volume II of the Haydn Society issue (TNR Oct. '54).

OPERA



Verdi: La Forza del Destino (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Tullio Serafin. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35199/201TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3531C/L) \$15.98.

Marchese di Calatrava.....Plinio Clabassi (bs)
Donna Leonora.....Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Don Carlo.....Carlo Tagliabue (bt)
Don Alvaro.....Richard Tucker (t)
Preziosilla.....Elena Nicolai (ms)
Padre Guardiano.....Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs)
Fra Melitone.....Renato Capecchi (bt)

There is no gainsaying the fact that Angel Records has gone all out to give us a really fine *Forza del Destino*, and perhaps it is actually better than the writer thinks it is. The only thing that keeps it from being an outstanding performance is the Don Alvaro of Richard Tucker. Perhaps contractual difficulties supervened, for one could think of several tenors who could have done much better and one who would have been magnificent.

If there ever were a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde it is Tucker in this set. When he sings properly, as he very well can, he is genuinely good; but when he tries to "emote," all the mock heroics and fake sobbings he indulges in make one's flesh creep. Really, it seems almost incredible that Mo. Serafin or the recording director couldn't have done something to keep him in check.

Maria Callas does, in the main, a creditable job as the harassed Leonora, although the writer still contends that she is no dramatic soprano. In both the *Pace, pace mio Dio* and in the finale her voice is forced to the point of making it wobble in a disturbing fashion. In less strenuous moments, however, she displays the golden tones that have brought her the renown she deservedly enjoys. Carlo Tagliabue, an old pro, turns in a fine performance as the vengeful Don Carlo. He is a tower of strength in the concerted

numbers and sings throughout in a manner that belies his years. Nicola Rossi-Lemeni is a somewhat colorless Padre Guardiano and inclined to sing in a muffled voice. Elena Nicolai is a properly vivacious Preziosilla and Capecchi a crusty Fra Melitone.

The writer was glad to see (or, rather, hear) that the duet, *Sleale, il segreto fu dunque violato*, has been included. Also on the credit side of the ledger is Tullio Serafin's fiery direction and the excellent choral singing and orchestral playing, all of which have been captured with sometimes startling realism by Angel's engineers.

The opera then, can be recommended for those who can abide Tucker's vocal eccentricities, for the other poor moments are brief and can easily be overlooked. W.

Verdi: La Traviata (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of l'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Francesco Molinari Pradelli. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-26) \$14.94.

Violetta.....Renata Tebaldi (s)
Alfredo.....Gianni Poggi (t)
Germont.....Aldo Protti (bt)
Gaston.....Piero di Palma (t)
Baron Douphol.....Antonio Sacchetti (bs)
Marquis d'Obigny.....Dario Caselli (bs)
Dr. Grenvil.....Ivan Sardi (bs)
Flora.....Angela Vercelli (ms)

Coming to this performance immediately after listening to Angel's *Forza* was rather a shock. Verdi here is writing what is almost a "chamber opera," very different from the blood and thunder of the other work.

To get right down to brass tacks, this writer was not in the least surprised that Renata Tebaldi sings a superb Violetta. She is a singing actress of the school of Muzio and Ponselle and rises to each and every occasion in a manner that excites the warmest admiration. Sgra. Tebaldi, as most opera fanciers now know, is the possessor of a glorious soprano, even throughout its range, never shrill and handled in such a way as to make it colorful and expressive at all times. This, coupled with a sure dramatic sense, makes every role she undertakes a sincere and moving portrayal.

What was not expected, however, was the genuinely fine Alfredo of Gianni Poggi. After having heard the corny versions of other, and more highly rated, tenors, Poggi's sane and controlled singing comes as a blessed relief. Not only that, but he sings the *cabaletta* to *Dei mei bollenti spiriti* (usually omitted in actual as well as recorded performances), *O mio rimorso!* — *o infamia!* and winds it up with a very creditable high D. His singing in the duets, particularly the finale, is notable for its fine vocalism and artistic restraint.

Aldo Protti is a so-so Germont; but then, Giorgio Germont was a so-so sort of character with the banal

Di Provenza to sing, and Protti makes as good a thing out of it as he can. The minor roles are capably handled.

Chief disappointment is the antique microphone placement or mixing that seems to put the orchestra and chorus in another room and the singers are favored to such an extent that one feels the others are of no importance. A libretto is supplied. W.

Rossini: La Cenerentola (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Glyndebourne Festival conducted by Vittorio Gui. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LHMV-600) \$9.98.

Clorinda.....Alda Noni (s)
Tisbe.....Fernanda Cadoni (ms)
Angelina (Cenerentola)....Marina de Gabarain (c)
Alidoro.....Hervey Alan (bs)
Don Magnifico.....Ian Wallace (bs)
Don Ramiro.....Juan Oncina (t)
Dandini.....Sesto Bruscantini (bs)

Rossini's ever delightful *La Cenerentola* (Cinderella) here receives its second LP recording. An earlier version on Cetra was, despite its drastic abridgement, a truly revealing performance (TNR Jan. '51) and featured a fine group of singers. Now HMV has released a recording of the Glyndebourne Festival performance. This version is more complete but it does omit, possibly among other things, Don Magnifico's wonderful second act patter song *Sia qualunque delle figlie*.

In the title role, the Spanish mezzo Marina de Gabarain, is no match for Simionato of the Cetra set. She lacks (at least on these records) the sparkle and humor requisite to a convincing performance. She has a pleasing voice, but much of her phrasing seems awkward—this is particularly noticeable in the finale *Non più mesta*. Juan Oncina is a fine tenor who makes an excellent Don Ramiro, and it would be difficult to imagine a better Dandini than Sesto Bruscantini.

The role of Don Magnifico is sung by Ian Wallace who shows a regrettable tendency towards hamminess. Admittedly the part lends itself very readily to this sort of treatment, but one always hopes that the singer or conductor will have sufficient artistic integrity not to succumb—alas, brother Wallace just wallows in the clownish aspects of the role (falsetto squeakings, exaggerated pronunciations, etc.) and spoils it. Christiano Dalamangas, in the Cetra recording, is infinitely superior. Two first-class singers, Alda Noni and Fernanda Cadoni, are the unattractive sisters and turn in fine performances.

Perhaps the greatest difference, however, between the two sets lies in the direction. Cetra had the services of the superb Mario Rossi and, while Vittorio Gui keeps things moving along, he does not achieve the results with the score his illustrious compatriot did. Recording in this new set is vastly superior to the older one.

It is hard, then, to dismiss the HMV set because of its greater completeness and truly excellent sound.

So, despite some artistic lapses Rossini enthusiasts are advised to consider it, even if they already have the Cetra set. There is a fine libretto, with notes and pictures. W.

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Tullio Serafin. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35186/7TP) \$6.46. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3527-3S/L) \$8.98.

Nedda.....Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Canio.....Giuseppe di Stefano (t)
Tonio.....Tito Gobbi (bt)
Beppe.....Nicola Monti (t)
Silvio.....Rolando Panerai (bt)

The writer had just finished playing the new Angel recording of *I Pagliacci* for a friend, and the following conversation took place:

THE WRITER: Well! And what did you think of that?

THE FRIEND: It certainly was one of the finest performances of *I Pagliacci* I ever heard.

W. There is no doubt that it is the finest recorded performance. What surprised me, however, was how wonderfully di Stefano sang Canio—after all, that is a role for a *robusto* tenor, and I never thought of him as being able to carry it off. What a Manrico he would make!

F. He surprised me too. I was thinking of those records you have that he made in Switzerland during the war; you know, *Musica proibita*, *Santa Lucia* and so on. He was no *robusto* then.

W. Most tenor's voices darken as they get older. Caruso's did, and so did Martinelli's. Di Stefano's has also gotten bigger and, for my money, he belongs in the same class as Caruso and Martinelli. Boy, how he can pour it on!

F. You bet. It took me a little while to get used to such a youthful sounding Canio; but, after all, Canio must have been a young man. How old is di Stefano anyhow?

W. He will be thirty-four this July. Did you ever hear fire and passion such as he gets in the finale? Honestly, he . . .

F. All you want to do is talk about di Stefano. After all, there are others in the cast!

W. *Touché*.

F. I think Gobbi and Panerai are among the finest baritones singing today. I particularly liked Gobbi—he sang the *Prologo* as though he really meant it.

W. That's the secret of a good singer. You forget him and think only of the character.

F. I agree. But what of Maria Callas? I was a little disappointed.

W. Yes. While she is still a fine soprano, there was some wobble in her high notes, as though she were forcing. I don't know. She is very convincing at times, however—particularly in the duet with Gobbi.

F. Yes. The whole set is a swell one. Serafin keeps

things moving along in fine style, and it is about the best sound Angel has yet given us.

W. Uh huh. Say, did you notice the expression and heart-break of Stefano put into the *Infamias*, just before *Vesti la giubba*?

F. There you go again!

W.

Operatic Recital. Giulietta Simionato (mezzo-soprano) with the Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Franco Ghione. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9162) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Il Barbiere de Siviglia*—Una voce poco fa; *Don Carlos*—O don fatale; *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*—Deh! tu bell anima (Bellini); *La Cenerentola*—Nacqui all' affanno.... Non più mesta.

Operatic Recital. Margot Guillaume (soprano) with the Orchestra of the Städtische Oper (Berlin) conducted by Walter Lutze. 1-10" disc (*T-TM-68025) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Le Nozze di Figaro*—O säume länger nicht; *Die Zauberflöte*—Ach, ich fühl's; *Marta*—Die letzte Rose; *Mignon*—Kennst du das Land?

These two discs of operatic arias feature some first class singing. Sgra. Giulietta Simionato has blossomed as a superior mezzo and these four excerpts are fine examples of her art. The principal novelty is the aria from Bellini's forgotten opera *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*. This is a lovely piece, a typical instance of Bellini's flowing melodic line. It is, in addition, one of those deceptively easy bits of music that require more breath control and sense of style than one usually encounters in present day singers. The *Don Carlos* and *Barbiere* selections are elegantly sung, but the writer was a little disappointed in Miss Simionato's performance of the rondo *Non più mesta*. Nevertheless, it is a charming little disc, well worth its price for the Bellini alone. Good sound.

Margot Guillaume has appeared on various other labels (Renaissance, Vox, etc.) singing Buxtehude cantatas and such. In them she displayed a lovely lyric soprano that was always used with taste and intelligence and sure musical insight. In this very brief LP (there is only about 15 minutes all told) she has the advantage of superior recording techniques, and she sounds lovelier than ever. The Mozart arias are extremely well sung, particularly from the point of style. The other two selections, while excellent vehicles for Miss Guillaume's lovely voice, do not offer much musical meat. Recommended for the Mozart.

W.

Bizet: Les Pêcheurs de Perles (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists, Elisabeth Brasseur Choir and l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 2-12" discs in album (*EPIC SC-6002) \$9.96.

Léila.....Pierrette Alarie (s)
Nadir.....Léopold Simoneau (t)
Zurga.....René Bianco (bt)
Nourabad.....Xavier Depraz (bs)

This is the second recording of Bizet's youthful

Les Pêcheurs de Perles, and technically it is a great improvement over its predecessor on Renaissance (TNR May '52). Vocally there is also a great improvement in the tenor department with not too much loss in the other categories—after all, the earlier set featured Mattiwilda Dobbs as Léila, and there are few sopranos today to equal her. Mlle. Alarie, in the present set, is also a first rate soprano and sings the music with verve and expression. Her voice is light, flexible and colorful—a sheer delight. René Bianco does not have the vocal equipment of Jean Borthayre (the earlier Zurga) but he does sing with a bit more expressiveness. Hearing him, one is more aware of Zurga than Bianco which, after all, is the real test of an operatic singer. The role of Nourabad is more than capably sung by Xavier Depraz. There remains our tenor, Léopold Simoneau and, as mentioned above, he is vastly superior to his predecessor. M. Simoneau has a light, high lyric tenor, ideally suited to the part; and his singing is marked by excellent phrasing and genuine conviction—his principal aria *Je crois entendre encore* is very effectively sung.

Jean Fournet directs a performance that has style and feeling. The choral work is also excellently executed. One would have no qualms about recommending the set if it were not for the drastic cuts that have been made in the performance. Space will not permit a listing, but the scissors have been used all too freely. This, coupled with the circumstance that the libretto supplied is at wide variance with what has been recorded, makes the performance difficult to follow.

One assumes, however, that more familiarity with this recorded version of *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* would iron out some of the difficulties. Certainly it is a very well sung and directed performance. W.

CHORAL



Ockeghem: Missa Prolationum. (Sung in Latin). Fleetwood Singers directed by James Fleetwood. 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-221) \$2.98.

(NOTE: See editorial for special introductory offer.)

This is the first extended work of the Flemish master, Johannes Ockeghem, to appear on records. Ockeghem is known primarily to music students as the teacher of Josquin des Pres and others. That he was an important composer in his own right becomes apparent on hearing this recording of his *Missa Prolationum*.

The *Missa Prolationum* is so named after the Prolation system, a method of increasing the value of a note in time, much the same as we, today, add a dot after a note. The four parts in the writing of this mass all have notes with different values—thus writing double canons, as Ockeghem has done here, is a veritable tour-de-force. Despite the formidable technical chore the composer has set himself, the music

never descends to the level of an exercise; rather the opposite, the problem serves as a challenge that is met with imagination and resource. The score has been arranged (a "practical transcription" is the way the jacket notes put it) from an original copy found in the legendary Chigi Codex in the Vatican library. The results indicate that not too much violence has been done it although, in the last analysis, it is difficult to say how it might have sounded in the 15th century.

The Fleetwood Singers are a group of thirteen young people trained by James Fleetwood. Their singing is marked by great purity of tone and crystal clear enunciation. Mr. Fleetwood appears to be a very capable young man who has been able to capture the style of this 15th century score and to communicate it to the listener.

The disc can be highly recommended to all students of Renaissance music, and to anyone interested in choral music that offers something new. It must be pointed out however, in all fairness, that the music of this period has little of the sensuous appeal that one finds in the music of the baroque period that followed it. Music was largely impersonal in those days but anyone who makes the effort to understand will be richly rewarded. There are good notes and the recorded sound is excellent. At its modest price the disc is a real buy. W.

Mendelssohn: Elijah, Op. 70. Jacqueline Delman (soprano), Norma Procter (contralto), George Maran (tenor), Bruce Boyce (baritone), Michael Cunningham (boy soprano), London Philharmonic Choir, Hampstead Parish Church Boys' Choir and the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-27) \$11.94.

Mendelssohn's *Elijah* always calls up for this reviewer a picture of Victorian England, with its general air of righteousness and passion for Mendelssohn and choral music. Not being able to share in many of these attributes, your servant was at a bit of a disadvantage; but he hoped that a really top-flight performance of what is generally recognized as Mendelssohn's foremost effort in oratorio might straighten him out. Alas, such was not the case—this *Elijah* was everything he feared it would be; portentous, dull and overblown.

The soloists, as a rule, are adequate although Bruce Boyce (who sang so well in the Oiseau-Lyre recording of Purcell's *Come, Ye Sons of Art*) is what Bernard Shaw would describe as "overparted." His voice wobbles on sustained notes, and his pronunciation of certain words struck the writer as affected; for example, God became "Gawd" and dew "dee-you"—such affectations went out with the bustle. The brightest member of the cast is Master Michael Cunningham, who has one of those meltingly lovely sopranos that are as disarming as they are beautiful.

The main fault of the set, however, is the innate dreariness of the performance. Maestro Krips does

not seem to obtain anything like drive or conviction from his singers and chorus; so the music wanders on sort of aimlessly to its foregone conclusion. This lack of enthusiasm even seems to have communicated itself to the recording engineers and their equipment, for the sound is wooden and lacking in any sort of brilliance—not the kind of sound one expects from London.

As if deciding the whole affair was not worth the trouble, London supplied no notes and was content to paste the text on the inside cover of the album—a practice that does not make for easy reading. W.



VOCAL

Hot Songs My Mother Taught Me. Lizzy Miles (vocals) with Tony Almerico's Band and Red Camp (piano). 1-12" disc (*SOT-1183) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Waitin' for the Robert E. Lee; Who's Sorry Now?; Mama Don' Allow It; Take Yo' Finger off It; Bill Bailey; Please Don't Talk about Me When I'm Gone; Chinatown; A Cottage for Sale; Ballin' the Jack; Dyin' Rag; Georgia on My Mind; By the Light of the Silvery Moon; Tishomingo Blues; The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise.*

Angel in the Absinthe House. La Vergne (vocals). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1081) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Lover Man; One for the Road; Black Magic; One Scotch, One Bourbon, One Beer; Blues in the Night; You'd Better Go Now; I Like That Kind of Carryin' On; Moonlight in Vermont; Hey There; Hurry on Down to My House; Straighten Up and Fly Right.*

Gospel in the Great Tradition. The Georgia Peach (vocals) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-5001) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Little David, Play on Your Harp; Tired; In My House; Swing Low, Sweet Chariot; I'm Gonna Leave You in the Hands of the Lord; I Must Tell Jesus; Does Jesus Care; Silent Night; I Know the Lord; I Ain't Gonna Lay My Religion Down; Only a Look; Precious Memories; My Master's Will; God's Amazing Grace; Well It's Alright.*

Blowout at Mardi Gras. Sid Davilla's and Freddie Kohlman's Band, with Red Camp (piano). 1-12" disc (*SOT-1084) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sultry Serenade; Three Thirty-Three; I Never Knew; Sympathy; You Tell Me Your Dream; Sid's Symphony; Stumblin'.*

Mr. Emory Cook has this to say to his many followers and admirers: "If I had to pick 3 records from the catalog with which to be marooned on a small coral atoll, *Hot Songs* would be one of them. If you ever had an urge to 'take a chance' on one of our records—heard or unheard—this is the one." Every song is a "good old number;" and Lizzie Miles puts every ounce she has (which is plenty) into each one.

Tottering on the corner of Bienville and Bourbon in the *Vieux Carré* in old New Orleans is The Old Absinthe House; and inside you'll probably find La Vergne Smith, a Creole girl who stops conversation with her husky, sophisticated singing.

Clara "Georgia Peach" Hudman has made recordings before for Decca, Manor, Appollo and Signature labels; her rough, guttural voice is used to advantage on these "shoutin'" Gospel numbers.

George Simon, writing in *Metronome Magazine*, has dubbed Sid Davilla's and Freddy Kohlman's Band "one of the greatest jazz bands I ever heard in my life," and you will not think him far wrong when you sample the unbelievable (and almost unendurable) heat generated by this crew, captured to the nth detail by Mr. Cook and his unattenuated audio-philes.

Hague: Plain and Fancy. Richard Derr and Shirl Conway with Original New York Cast. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-603) \$5.95.

Porter: Silk Stockings. Don Ameche and Hildegard Neff with Original New York Cast. 1-12" disc (*V-LOC-1016) \$4.98.

Recordings of Broadway shows have been, by and large, commercial successes, and the two present ones will prove, we feel, no exceptions. Delightful souvenirs for those who have seen the shows, they provide others with examples of what modern day Gilberts and Sullivans are doing.

Elizabethan and Jacobean Music. Alfred Deller (counter-tenor) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-539) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Can she excuse my wrongs?* (Dowland); *Air for 3 Viols* (Morley); *Of all the birds that I do know* (Bartlett); *Alman for Harpsichord* (Johnson); *If my complaints could passions move* (Dowland); *Pavan for 4 Viols* (Jenkins); *I care not for these ladies* (Campian); *My lady Hunsdon puffed* (lute) (Dowland); *Pandolpho* (Parsons); *Fantasia in C for 4 Viols* (Jenkins); *From silent Night* (Dowland); *Up Tails All* (harpsichord) (Farnaby).

Chants de la France. Lucie Daullene (soprano) accompanied by Joseph Canteloube (piano). 1-12" disc in box (*OL-50047) \$4.98.

This Bach Guild disc of Elizabethan and Jacobean music is one of the best of its type to appear as yet on LP. The arrangement of the record (i.e., a song and then an instrumental number) is ideal for variety and easy listening.

Mr. Deller, one of the few counter-tenors (male altos) around today, is a remarkable singer. The notes are a little vague concerning Mr. Deller—one wishes there were a little more about counter-tenors in general, particularly as to how the voice is produced. Strange it certainly is, but it is also extremely beautiful and singularly appropriate for the music.

The instrumentalists, viols, lute and harpsichord are all first class, and the music is a sheer delight

from start to finish. Bach Guild has recorded the recital in impeccable fashion and has also included the texts of the songs (airs) as well as informative notes on the period by Sidney Beck.

The *Chants de la France* constitute a little problem for this writer. They are sung by Lucie Daullene and, here again, one would welcome a little data on the artist. Mlle. Daullene sounds as though she were fourteen or fifteen years old and, what's more, she sings through her nose most of the time. The effect is curious for the first few songs, but it palls rapidly.

The songs, some fourteen in number, were collected and harmonized by Joseph Canteloube and are, on the whole, delightful as folk songs can often be for awhile; fourteen of them, however, becomes "too much of a muchness" as Alice said. The titles of the *chants* mean little and hence they are not listed above. They have been gathered from Gascony, the Auvergne, Picardy, Savoy and other regions; but, outside a few general comments, no other information is given. Texts are also conspicuous by their absence. This is a disc to be heard first; some will be entranced, others bored.

W.



PIANO

An Evening with Alistair Cooke. Alistair Cooke (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4970) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes*; *Spring Song*; *Blue Skies*; *She's Funny That Way*; *The Man I Love*; *Cupid, Ease a Lovesick Maid*; *Have You Forgotten God?*; *Perpetual Motion*; *Janie in the Hospital*; *Long Island Breakdown*; *The Mikado*—*Madrigal*; *Up the Country*; *Wild Track Blues*; *T-Bone Blues*; *Mamie's Blues*; *Basin Street Blues*.

We read the jacket notes (by George Avakian) as we listened to this LP, and if the titles of the numbers weren't the same as those listed on the sleeve, we'd have wondered whether we had the right disc. Has the record business reached such a low ebb that a critic with the forthrightness of Avakian really has to write so much praise about so little. Why, we have neighbors who can play the piano better, sing better and even whistle better than Alistair Cooke!

Now we could listen to Mr. Cooke speak all evening; and Omnibus is one of our favorite TV shows, no small tribute being due to Mr. Cooke for this fact. He seems absolutely perfect as emcee. Much is made, in Avakian's notes, of the greatness of Alistair Cooke as a reporter; and we do not doubt this for a moment. But Cooke, the reporter, has no connection with Cooke, the jazz pianist; and Avakian should know this.

Mr. Cooke's running commentaries are most interesting, Mr. Avakian; what about retracting this disc and issuing one with Cooke commenting on Meade "Lux" Lewis' playing, Louis Armstrong or Lizzie Miles doing the vocals? And you could probably issue it at \$3.95!

J.

Schumann: Carnival, Op. 9. One side, and **Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35.** Alfred Cortot (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LH MV-18) \$4.98.

Weber: (6) Pieces, Op. 3. One-half side, and **Weber: (8) Pieces, Op. 60.** Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4968) \$3.98.

Chief interest in the RCA Victor disc above will be the artistry of Alfred Cortot, who has been making records for, these many years. If he has lost a little of his power (which is not at all evident!), he makes up for it in experienced musicianship, performing works for which he is well known in his concerts. . . . There is little of Weber's music for piano available at all, and so far as we can determine this is the only sampling of his work for four hands; it is nice to have the dozen and two little pieces available, and Gold and Fizdale make the most of them.

ORGAN



Organ Recital by Lynnwood Farnam. Reproduced from Organ Rolls made in 1930 for Austin Organs, Inc., Hartford (Conn.). Registration and expression by Clarence Watters, playing the organ at St. John's Church, West Hartford (Conn.). 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-1040) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *O Gott, du frommer Gott* (Bach); *Concerto in F, Op. 4, No. 5* (Handel); *Concerto in B-flat, Op. 7, No. 3—Menuet* (Handel); *The Mirrored Moon* (Karg-Elert); *Carillon in A-flat* (Sowerby); *Carillon de Westminster* (Vierne).

Who was Lynnwood Farnam? In the jacket notes, Paul Hume says: "Few organists have arisen in any country, even where organ music has large numbers of admirers, whose fame has lasted beyond their own day. Yet W. Lynnwood Farnam, who died in 1930, at the early age of 45, is still spoken of today by his many pupils, by their pupils, and by those fortunate enough to have heard him. He is remembered as a rare, if not unique genius, in the highly difficult art of making the world's greatest music for organ come to life on that often intractable instrument."

The recordings heard on this disc were made in 1930, in which year Farnam died, and are thought to be the only recordings of any kind which he ever made. This recording has been made possible through the ingenuity and mechanical ability of Austin Organs, Inc. of Hartford, Conn. About 1923 the late John T. Austin turned his attention to the inventing and perfecting of a player mechanism that would automatically record and reproduce the playing of an organist with complete fidelity. Previous player mechanisms on the market fell far short of absolute accuracy and fidelity. Austin's efforts culminated in a patent which provided for a revolutionary means of controlling the expansion of the paper and a five

section tracker bar, the four movable sections of which automatically expanded and contracted to compensate for the swelling and shrinking of a wide paper roll. In 1926 the first "Quadruplex Player" was built. It operated over the entire range of a three manual organ—notes played, all stop changes, and all expression pedal movements.

It must be realized that playing a pipe organ with electric action is a mechanical matter which can be captured precisely with such a device as this one. There is not the matter of touch, which is the critical thing in piano playing. We can report that no one could possibly detect this record as having been made from a mechanical device—it is absolutely perfect, and it is uncanny, to say the least. Clarence Watters realized the registration on the St. John's organ, and the reproduction of this beautiful and richly voiced organ is superb. Lynnwood Farnam's playing is as near perfection as you are likely ever to hear. We recommend this disc without reservation as a cherished part of the organ library. S.

The King of Instruments (Vol. IV). Edgar Hilliar, playing the organ at St. Marks Episcopal Church, Mt. Kisco (N. Y.). 1-12" disc (*AEOLIAN-SKINNER Vol. 4) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan* (Pachelbel); *Air Tendre* (Loeillet); *Trio Sonata IV* (Bach); *Messe Solennelle—Ofertoire sur les Grande Jeux* (Couperin); *Cortege et Litanie* (Dupre); *Flute Tune* (Arne); *O Mensch, beweine' dien' Sunde gross* (Bach).

Aeolian-Skinner's fine series of organ records brings us Volume IV, recorded on an organ with a rather unusual stoplist (which is printed on the jacket), an organ which stands in a church which leaves much to be desired in the matter of acoustical properties. This church has practically no resonance, and this fact is mentioned in the description of the organ and the building, but it is pointed out that this is an example of how an organ can be voiced to best cope with this all too prevalent problem. One is not aware of the deficiency until the sounding of the louder passages, using much of the organ's resources; then the lack of resonance is felt in the recording. There are many lovely effects in this recording; outstanding are the warmer and more romantic voices. Organists will enjoy the Pachelbel variations, for the entire registration is printed on the jacket. It is also interesting for the layman, for after he reads the stoplist, he can then find out just what a *bordun*, *grossoktav* sound like when played against a *krummhorn*, to say nothing of a *viol pomposa* and *hellpfeife* in one hand and a *quintaton* and *rohrflöte* in the other.

Fascinating as an organ is mechanically, it is the sound that counts, and Aeolian-Skinner knows how to voice them. Also, Edgar Hilliar is a gifted player, and he plays this well-chosen program with admirable

insight. The arrangement of the numbers on the disc provides good contrast between them. As these records are released, they are providing a comprehensive survey of the best in organ repertoire, as well as excellent recordings of some outstanding instruments in this country.

S.

DICTION



Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet (excerpts). Cast from the film by J. Arthur Rank, with Prologue by Sir John Gielgud. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3126) \$3.98.

Shakespeare: Hamlet (6 excerpts). Maurice Evans assisted by Emmett Rogers. One side, and **Shakespeare: King Richard II** (3 excerpts). Maurice Evans assisted by Abraham Sofaer. 1-12" disc (*CRL-3107) \$2.98. (TNR Jan. '47 & Sept. '37).

It is a shame not to be able to give more praise to the Epic disc, taken from the sound track of the very fine J. Arthur Rank film, *Romeo and Juliet*; as a motion picture, the production had great merit, having won the Grand Prize at the 1954 Venice Film Festival. But on records it must necessarily compete with the superb reading of *Romeo and Juliet* by the Old Vic Company (*V-LM-6110, TNR Dec. '53); and we can therefore recommend the present disc only as a souvenir of the film or a "bargain priced" record of excerpts from the play for those whose budgets or tastes do not run to complete versions. But actually, for the student or for one who wishes truly to enjoy the play, the complete version (even at triple the price, \$11.98) is a greater bargain.

Columbia has been digging some very interesting discs out of its vaults for reissue on its Entré series; and one of its better efforts is the Maurice Evans record above, previously reviewed in THE NEW RECORDS in the issues indicated. Not hi-fi, the diction nevertheless comes through well.

Pardon My Blooper (Vol. 3). Fluffs, Spoonerisms, Slips, Flubs and Bloopers from Radio and TV collected by Kermit Schafer. 1-10" disc (*JUBILEE LP-19) \$3.85.

Volume I (TNR Apr. '54) and Volume 2 (TNR Sept. '54) of this *Pardon My Blooper* series met with considerable success for items of this type. Volume 3 contains more of these boners which are the bane of radio and TV performers. They are as funny as their predecessors and require an equal amount of broad-mindedness.

Our only criticism is the words "Hi-Fidelity" which appear on the jacket; this disc is about as high fidelity as a cylinder record played with a six-penny nail.

BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ES—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polytone, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø Indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

In April 1955 we reviewed the first volume of *The Guide to Long-Playing Records*, which was devoted to Orchestral Music and was written by Irving Kolodin; we stated then that we anxiously awaited the second and third volumes, and our anxiety is now at an end. For Messrs. Miller and Schonberg have not let us down, and the *Guide* is now complete.

Harold Schonberg is well known to record collectors on both sides of the Atlantic, for his writings appear regularly in the *New York Times* and *The Gramophone*, a British magazine for discophiles. In the main, his book is arranged alphabetically by composer, then alphabetically by title, with first preferences usually being listed first, except where couplings prevent this. Beginning with p. 253 the book is devoted to recordings of "collections," where several composers are represented on one LP disc; and this section is alphabetically by artist. There is a performer index at the very back of the book.

Philip Miller is currently record editor of the *New York Public Library Journal*, and will be remembered for his many articles in the *American Record Guide*, *The Saturday Review*, and *Consumer Reports*. His book is in two sections: the first lists (alphabetically by composer) the various compositions, and the second lists recitals, much like Mr. Schonberg's "collections" section. As in the other two, a performer index rounds out the volume.

It is interesting to note that all three of the authors of the *Guide* have placed performance above reproduction; of course, they warn us when reproduction may not be up to snuff, but they, as we, feel that the performance is, after all, what really counts, and if a truly great performance happens to have been caught with high fidelity sound, so much the better. This is especially true as regards vocal music, for there are many LP re-issues of acoustic and electric 78's by artists who have passed from the scene, but whose voices were worthy of being preserved for posterity.

No effort has been made by any of the writers to make these volumes complete listings of all LP's; the Schwann catalog does that. The aim has been to offer a guide to the bewildered collector who will not be surprised when he learns that there were more LP records issued in 1954 than there were hours in the year. Whether they will have succeeded will be, admittedly, a personal opinion; but the collector will do well, we think, to consider the opinions of Kolodin, Miller and Schonberg in selecting discs for his library; he might find better selections—but he could certainly find worse ones.

All three volumes of *The Guide to Long-Playing Records* are now available and may be ordered from the publisher of this bulletin if your local dealer cannot supply you. Orchestral Music is \$3.50, the other two are priced in the heading; prices include postage to any point in U.S.A.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid

within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning June 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (post-paid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 95 in C minor.** Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra conducted by Vittorio Gui. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-11) \$4.98.

Mozart: Symphony No. 34 in C, K. 338. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 38 in D, K. 504** ("Prague"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1198) \$3.98.

Mozart: Symphony No. 38 in D, K. 504 ("Prague"). (TNR Dec. '53). One side, and **Smetana: Vysehrad** ("The High Castle"). And **Smetana: Vltava** ("The Moldau"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50042) \$4.98.

Mozart: Concerto No. 17 in G, K. 453. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K. 595.** Hans Henkemans (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3117) \$3.98.

The first disc in the batch listed above seems to be a good one, except for one thing. The exception is the third movement Minuet of the Mozart No. 39. While playing it through we thought we heard a harpsichord in the ensemble, so we played it on another instrument; then it did not sound so much like a harpsichord as it did before. After playing and re-playing it several times on different phonographs, we confess to being at a loss. We know of no harpsichord being called for; and since our score does not indicate one, we can only conclude that if it is there, it is the conductor's idea. If it is not there, the quality of the reproduction leaves much to be desired. Strangely enough, the reproduction elsewhere on both sides of this disc is splendid, and the performances are excellent. If that third movement sounds all right to you, this disc is a good one; if you feel as we do about it, better look elsewhere for these works.

The next disc brings a pair of symphonies, Mozart Nos. 34 and 38, which are offered in identical couplings by Kubelik and the Chicago Symphony (*ME-MG-50015); No. 38 is also offered in a new coupling, indicated in the third heading above, with *The Moldau* and *The High Castle*. These latter two Smetana works are from the cycle "My Fatherland" previously issued in its entirety by Mercury (*ME-OL-2-100). And therein lies an interesting thing for record collectors. Those who like what they know

and do not necessarily want less familiar items as necessary couplings will find the new Mercury coupling a pleasant package, for it contains the lovelier of the Mozart symphonies (one of the best of them all, in fact) and the wonderfully evocative *Moldau*. Considering the excellence of each of these performances, this is indeed a disc to be recommended. For those who want all Mozart, Karl Böhm offers a pair of performances in the Viennese tradition that will warm the cockles of the Mozartean heart. His readings are sweet, gentle and precise, but always graceful and elegant. Very nicely recorded, too.

Epic's disc containing Mozart's last piano concerto, No. 27, and the delicate No. 17 is a fine one. No. 17 is about the best on LP, and No. 27 can stand beside any of the others. Henkemans' style is appropriate, his playing accurate, and the reproduction is very good. If the coupling suits you, this one is worth hearing. S.

Stravinsky: Pulcinella (Ballet Suite after Pergolesi).

One side, and **Stravinsky: Le Baiser de la Fée—Divertimento.** L'Orchestre national de la Radio-diffusion française conducted by Igor Markevitch. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35143TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35143) \$4.98.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25 ("Classical"). One side, and **Prokofiev: Symphony No. 5, Op. 100.** Concerts Colonne Orchestra conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9170) \$5.95.

Prokofiev: Scythian Suite, Op. 20. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Rolf Kleinert. One side, and **Kodály: Concerto for Orchestra.** Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Heinz Bongartz. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7138) \$3.98.

Those who feel that Stravinsky did not write anything other than *Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *Rite of Spring* that falls easily on the ear will do well to sample the Angel disc listed above, which pairs *Pulcinella* and *The Fairy's Kiss*. *Pulcinella* is based on music of Pergolesi, which Stravinsky has not, however, merely orchestrated. With typical originality, the modern master has taken the melodies of Pergolesi and supplied a scoring for thirty-three players. The result is charming music with a freshness and point that make agreeable and pleasant listening. Based on Hans Christian Andersen's tale "The Ice Maiden," Stravinsky's ballet *The Fairy's Kiss* draws its melodies from some of Tchaikovsky's salon pieces. This symphonic suite, or divertimento, drawn from the ballet is a well-constructed piece which proves as pleasant listening as *Pulcinella*—both are good listening music without knowledge of the ballet or its story. The present performances are splendid and feature reproduction that is ideal.

Prokofiev's two best known symphonies are here presented on one disc, the first time anything has been coupled with the *Fifth*. This is but the fourth

recording ever issued of the great *Fifth Symphony*, and it may be argued to be its best recording. Each of the three others is a good one — Koussevitzky, Rodzinski, and Tuxen; but Horenstein is also a master of dramatic interpretation and conducting, and he does an admirable job with this work. Vox supplies reproduction that virtually takes you by the neck and sits you in the orchestra, but it is clear and thrilling. Interpretation and reproduction are a shade big for the *Classical Symphony* but better than the glossing-over it too often receives.

Kadály's *Concerto for Orchestra*, in its first recorded performance, turns out to be a work in one continuous movement, conventional in most respects, pleasant to hear, and the work of a skilled craftsman. While it will not make the classical hit parade, neither will it offend many ears. It is played quite splendidly by the Dresden Philharmonic and richly reproduced. The acrid music of Prokofiev's *Scythian Suite* is purveyed by the Radio Berlin Orchestra under Kleinert in a clear recording that does not displace Ormandy's.

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 ("Pastoral"). Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50045) \$4.98.

Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished"). One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat**. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1105) \$3.98.

There are a lot of recordings of the Beethoven *Pastoral*; Schwann lists eighteen. We have covered quite a few in the past several years. As a comparison for the present disc, we selected the recently reviewed Stokowski, also the much admired Steinberg, and the criterion to many, Toscanini. To be fair, we should also have sampled Beecham, Furtwängler, Kleiber, Von Karajan, and despite its age, the Bruno Walter version. But with the dinner hour a bare two hours off, we would never have made it. As recordings of the *Pastoral* go, we do not care too much for the Paray reading; it is about the first thing Paray has committed to records for Mercury which we do not like. He begins the work with a tempo which even Toscanini would not have considered in a moment of extreme anger. And from that point on, Paray seems to be bent on making his version of the *Pastoral* different for the sake of being different. Even Stokowski, who has a penchant for being original, selects more judicious tempi, although Stokowski indulges in other originalities in matters of balance and inner voices. But the end result is that Stokowski is more convincing. For those who want a traditional type of reading, Steinberg, Toscanini, and practically any of the other conductors mentioned above, will soothe your pastoral feelings nicely. Mercury's reproduction is good, but not appreciably better than that accorded the gentlemen who have a better notion of what the

Pastoral Symphony is all about.

With the London disc of Schubert's two lovely symphonies, we come into a style of playing that is hard to resist. The Vienna Philharmonic under Karl Böhm begins the Schubert *Fifth* in a manner that says "Sit back and relax, this will be a tonic for your nerves." It is just that; this wonderfully beautiful music is played with a charm, grace, and polish that is irresistible. No striving for effect, just honest and skillful playing. This performance of the "Unfinished" is exactly the same, Viennese, highly refined—and a pure joy. Some folks may prefer a bit more dramatic statement of the "Unfinished," but even they will admit that Böhm's serenity is becoming to this work. London's reproduction is excellent, particularly in the *Fifth*.

S.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 1 in F, Op. 10. One side, and **Shostakovich: The Golden Age** (Ballet Suite). National Symphony Orchestra of Washington (D. C.) conducted by Howard Mitchell. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5319) \$5.95.

Shostakovich: The Fall of Berlin (Suite from the Film). State Radio Orchestra and Chorus of the USSR conducted by Alexander Gauk. One side, and **Khachaturian: Battle for Stalingrad** (Suite from the Film). State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Aram Khachaturian. 1-12" disc (*CLAS-CE-3009) \$5.95.

Shostakovich: Ballet Suite No. 1, Op. 84. And **Kabelevsky: The Comedians, Op. 26**. One side, and **Prokofiev: Love for Three Oranges—Symphonic Suite, Op. 33a**. And **Borodin: Prince Igor—Girl's Dance; Polovtsian Dances**. Berlin Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7146) \$3.98.

The satirical ballet "The Golden Age" here receives its first recording, so far as we know. It is typical Shostakovich, of the witty, satirical, bitter-sweet variety. If you are in a cynical frame of mind, this is good background music for you. The Adagio, an extended section, is really nice for minutes on end, but it has a few acrid moments; the polka is well known, and its pert little tunes are expertly tossed off in this performance. The final section, Dance, is delightfully dissonant and angular. The really worthwhile side of this disc is the *First Symphony*, one of the masterpieces of modern symphonic writing. Mitchell and the National Symphony give this work a sterling performance, and are excellently recorded. We can give this record a high recommendation.

Music born of war, battle music, victory music, and all that sort of thing is always a rousing success in the wake of war—but it seldom lasts. Tchaikovsky's 1812 *Overture* still has currency, and a few songs remain from bygone war eras, but by and large this stuff is usually trite and loses appeal in time. We have here two mighty canvases of music tarred with the patriotic brush, by two of the most gifted Soviet composers. There is no denying the effectiveness of

this music; it is good music of its kind, and it is, of course, the work of skilled composers. As purely abstract music (for instance, if you tuned in the radio, after the announcement, and just heard the music through), this is better than much contemporary drivel. However, if you read the titles of the sections on the record labels first, you might be prejudiced. Here is the lineup for the Stalingrad battle: *A Town on the Volga*, *Invasion*, *Stalingrad in Flames*, *The Enemy is Doomed*, *In Battle for the Motherland*, *Glory Forever to the Heroes*, *Forward to Victory*, *There's a Cliff on the Volga*. Oh my, could that ever spawn good music?

The Urania disc listed above provides a splendid assortment of music, well performed and recorded. All of this music is of the very listenable, fall-easy-on-the-ear variety; even the Shostakovich *Ballet Suite* is far gentler than the *Age of Gold*—it is, in fact, almost too sweet! Kabalevsky's *Comedians*, a favorite of ours, never had it better on records than in this remarkably well-played edition. *The Love for Three Oranges Suite* is well performed; the *Polovtsian Dances* uses the full choral parts—and they are mighty well sung and recorded so you can hear them. This is indeed a fine record for material, performance, and reproduction, and a good bargain at the price asked. S.

Percussion! Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin and the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony conducted by Harold Byrns. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8299) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto for Percussion and Small Orchestra* (Milhaud); *Toccata for Percussion* (Chavez) (both by Slatkin). *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celeste* (Bartók) (by Byrns).

Respighi: *Brazilian Impressions*. One side, and **Granados:** (2) *Spanish Dances*. L'Orchestre des Concerts Colonne conducted by George Sebastian. And Chavez: *Toccata for Percussion*. Gotham Percussion Players conducted by Milton Forstat. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7144) \$5.95.

Percussion! is strictly for the hi-fi fan, although the musically adventurous will find some interesting, if weird, music contained on this Capitol LP. But if the audiophile wants to check his transient response, Messrs. Milhaud, Chavez and Bartók will show it up for him. Our hats are off to the various musicians on this disc, for surely the music must be extraordinarily difficult to play; we rather imagine the difficulty to be similar to an American speed typist being required to copy page after page of matter written in Hungarian. The Bartók number was previously issued as a 10-inch disc (TNR Sept. '50).

Urania gives us another *Toccata for Percussion*, for which we give doubtful thanks. The *Two Dances* by Granados, on the same side, are quite uninteresting; so far as we are concerned, that side would always be "down" on our phonograph. Respighi's *Brazilian Impressions*, in its only available LP record-

ing, is very, very good, however, and M. Sebastian has given us a fine, colorful reading. This is a neglected work, not quite as flashy as *The Pines* and *The Fountains* but as deserving of a hearing.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 4 in G, Op. 88. One and one-half sides, and **Dvorák: Scherzo Capriccioso, Op. 66.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wolfgang Sawallisch. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35214TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35214) \$4.98.

Dvorák: Concerto in G minor, Op. 33. Rudolf Firkusny (piano) with the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4967) \$3.98.

Though far overshadowed by the everlasting popularity of the *New World*, Dvorák's *Symphony No. 4* is a good, strong work which has a steady following. The *Fourth* has pleasing melody in abundance, and a nice steady drive that maintains interest. The LP lists contain several *Fourths* by conductors celebrated for their Dvorák performances, including Kubelik, Szell, and Walter. The present disc is by a conductor previously unknown to us, Wolfgang Sawallisch. Sawallisch is a rising young conductor on the continent, born in Munich, who studied in that area and had operatic experience in Augsburg. Since 1953 he has been General Musical Director at Aachen, and has guest conducted most of the principal orchestras in Europe. Sawallisch will be thirty-two in August; for a man of that age, he has had an impressive background, and his work as heard on this disc is indeed impressive. The virtuoso Philharmonia Orchestra responds admirably to Sawallisch' direction, and the conductor has a genuine feeling for the score. Despite the experience and the identification with Dvorák of the several conductors who have previously recorded this work, we think most persons will enjoy the present disc as well as any of the others, not in the least for its excellent reproduction. There is also a bonus on this disc in the *Scherzo Capriccioso*. This work can be described as a Slavonic Dance, raised to a symphonic level. It is a robust work in every respect, and Sawallisch gives it a rousing reading.

Largely through the efforts of Rudolf Firkusny, the Dvorák *Piano Concerto* has made a re-entry into the concert field. Not a well scored work originally, Firkusny's teacher made a revision of the piano parts, and Firkusny has further worked the score over into the version usually heard these days. The only previous LP version of this work, by Wührer and Moralt, although a good one, must give way to the present version which bristles with conviction and devotion. Firkusny has more than a casual interest in the work, and Szell is always pitching hard in anything connected with Dvorák. This is a brilliant performance, which gives the music a sharpness of profile others will have difficulty matching. It is well reproduced. S.

Ports of Call. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4983) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Bolero* (Ravel); *La Valse* (Ravel); *Escapes* ("Ports of Call") (Ibert); *Pavane pour une Infante défunte* (Ravel); *Clair de Lune* (Debussy); *España* (Chabrier).

Ravel: Bolero. And **Honegger: Pacific 231.** One side, and **Dukas: L'Apprenti Sorcier.** And **Ravel: La Valse.** L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1156) \$3.98.

Nine very popular selections are offered this month, six by "The World's Greatest Orchestra," and three by one of the world's great conductors. The maverick in the lot is Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231*, which seems out of place in this collection; however, since the piece was dedicated to M. Ansermet, we guess we can't quarrel with its inclusion here, and if you think you'd like "the translation into musical terms of the visual impression and the physical sensation" of a locomotive, you'll not find a better interpretation of it than on this London *ffrr* disc.

R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28. And **Weber: Der Freischütz—Overture.** One side, and **R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20.** And **Weber: Euryanthe—Overture.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-19) \$4.98.

Lest our readers think that the issuance of this disc was occasioned by the recent passing of Dr. Furtwängler, let us hasten to assure them that not a word about the late conductor appears in the jacket notes; apparently, then, this disc was "in the works" and would have been issued, anyway.

Although we have heard some records of Furtwängler's that we thought mannered and not in the spirit of the work performed, we have always thought that when he was right he was magnificent. Who can forget, who has ever heard it, his reading of Tchaikovsky's *Sixth* on Victor (and HMV) 78's? It is to the great German's credit that he makes these four pot-boilers sound fresh and alive by exercising razor-edged control over the outstanding Vienna Philharmonic. Warmly recommended as an example of Herr Furtwängler when he was "right."

Rimsky-Korsakov: Tsar Saltan Suite. State Radio of the USSR conducted by Nicolai Golovanov. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol.** State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. And **Ippolitov-Ivanov: Armenian Rhapsody.** State Radio Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Niyazi. 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-271) \$2.98.

(NOTE: See editorial of May 1955 issue for special introductory offer.)

Except for a certain shrillness, which can easily be

cut out on any phonograph with a treble control, Kingsway discs have about as clear reproduction as any on the market today. The State Radio of the USSR tackles three Russian compositions with expected relish and performs each commendably; the Ippolitov-Ivanov *Armenian Rhapsody* is a filler for the second side, and appears for the first time on LP.

Rodgers: Oklahoma Suite. One side, and **Rodgers: Carousel Suite.** Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1884) \$3.98.

Morton Gould seems to have switched to RCA Victor and this month offers rousing Suites from two of the most popular musicals of all time. Recommended to those who like these familiar melodies without words.

Dvorák: Symphonic Variations, Op. 78. One side, and **Balakireff: Tamar** (Symphonic Poem). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4974) \$3.98.

Leave it to Sir Thomas to come up with two interesting, yet seldom played, pieces. This is the first LP of the *Variations* and the third of *Tamar*, the real competition being Ansermet (*L-LL-1068, TNR Apr. '55). Dvorák, the master melodist and borrower of folk songs, gives us a theme and 26 variations capped by a Finale and a series of epilogues; and Sir Thomas Beecham, sometimes winking, sometimes smiling, runs through these with ease and *élan*. He takes Balakireff's *Symphonic Poem* in his stride, too, wringing the last drop out of it without making it larger than life. A disc to show the talents of the ineluctable Sir Thomas; few others could make so much out of this music.

CONCERTO



Bach: Double Concerto in D minor. Yehudi Menuhin and Gioconda de Vito (violins) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anthony Bernard. One side, and **Handel: Trio Sonata No. 2 in D.** Gioconda de Vito and Yehudi Menuhin (violins); John Shinebourne (violin cello); and George Malcolm (harpsichord). And **Vivaldi: Concerto in C** ("Il Placere"). Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-16) \$4.98.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. David Oistrakh (violin) with the Stockholm Festival Orchestra conducted by Sixten Ehrling. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35162TP) \$3.48. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35162) \$4.98.

Elgar: Concerto in B minor, Op. 61. Alfred Campoli (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1168) \$3.98.

Several distinguished pairs of violinists have recorded the Bach *Double Concerto*, but none of them

plays with more noble purpose, more intensity, and more love for the task at hand than Menuhin and Miss de Vito. Miss de Vito and Menuhin join in a carefully detailed reading of a Handel trio sonata, and Menuhin plays solo fiddle in a Vivaldi concerto which is another delightful, short work by the Italian master, whose works are enjoying a rebirth of popularity. Collectors of violin records will find out-of-the-way-yet-completely-charming music on this disc, played with consummate artistry, well reproduced.

David Oistrakh, Goliath among virtuoso violinists of the day, is back again; this time with another recording of a most popular violin concerto. This is the fourth entry in the LP lists for Oistrakh playing the Beethoven *Concerto*; however, it is the first one recorded outside of Russia, and that is the whole story in one simple phrase. The reproduction of this disc is better than the previous Beethoven's by Oistrakh. As for Oistrakh, himself, the man is always good, and this time he is in top form. Listen to him go through the (Kreisler) cadenza, if you do not have time for anything else. His accuracy is truly uncanny. Oistrakh's followers will need to go no further than this to find a Beethoven *Violin Concerto* to their taste. Considering the imposing roster of violinists who have recorded this work, we must admit that this is not the only one to be considered. Many will find the Francescatti, Menuhin, Haendel, Ricci, Heifetz, or some other a more exciting musical experience. Several of those named have more on the ball in the accompaniment department. But for a good, solid, all around choice, well recorded, Oistrakh may be safely recommended.

The only previous recording of the Elgar *Concerto* is by Heifetz; needless to say it is a good one, if not quite up to this one in matters of reproduction. Campoli is not as electrifying in anything as Heifetz. Campoli is always a very smooth and rather conservative player. His reading of the Elgar could hardly be called anything but beautiful; Boulton's cooperation is close to perfection. This is certainly a challenge to the Heifetz recording and will be preferred by many for its warmth. S.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 22.

Emil Gilels (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 16 in B-flat, K. 570.** Emil Gilels (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35132TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35132) \$4.98.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 4 in C minor, Op. 44. One side, and **Chopin: Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21.** Alexander Brailowsky (piano) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1871) \$3.98.

Emil Gilels bears the singular distinction of having three different LP's presently in the Schwann catalog of the Saint-Saëns' *Second Piano Concerto*, each with

a different orchestra. The present Angel disc is an easy winner among the three for reproduction, and Mr. Gilels' reading is a fine one, pressing Frugoni (*VX-PL-8410, TNR May '55) for honors on this score. A decision will be reached, no doubt, on the question of price and of coupling. Frugoni has paired Saint-Saëns' *Fifth* with his version of the *Second*, which is more logical; and Vox records are selling in most stores for \$3.98 (see Editorial, TNR March '55). Gilels performs the lovely little Mozart *Sonata No. 16* on the reverse of his disc which, while perhaps not so logical as the Vox coupling, is still a beautiful work and one of the two best (with Mme. Kraus, *HS-HSL-127, TNR Apr. '55) readings of this delightful piece; Angel "Thrifty-Packs" (un-sealed, no notes) sell for \$3.48.

The unorthodox (it has but two movements) *Fourth Concerto* of Saint-Saëns receives its second LP recording this month, and an exciting one it is; we much prefer it to the older Columbia one, featuring Casadesu and Rodzinski. Brailowsky certainly makes the most of this melodic piece, playing with virtually a full head of steam all the way; and Charles Münch directs the Boston Symphony in an almost perfect accompaniment which drives the soloist to even greater heights. It's a wonder, with all the duplication on LP these days, that there are not more recordings of the *Fourth*, for it is an easy work to like, romantic and containing thematic material which falls smoothly on the ears; yet it is a wonderful exhibition piece for the soloist, and, as has been indicated earlier, Brailowsky makes the most of it. The Chopin *Second* is expertly performed, too; however, if it is the Chopin that interests you in this disc, we suggest a comparison with Badura-Skoda (*WEST-WL-5308, TNR Nov. '54), which pairs Chopin's *First* and *Second*. Couplings on LP's make best choices difficult, particularly for those of us on a limited budget; nevertheless, we are so much impressed with Brailowsky's reading of the Saint-Saëns' *Fourth Concerto* that we will stick our neck out and suggest that you would not go far wrong to get it, even if you already have the aforementioned Badura-Skoda; lovers of piano concertos will not be disappointed. J.

Dvorák: Concerto in G minor, Op. 33. Rudolf Firkusny (piano) with the Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4967) \$3.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

Mozart: Concerto No. 17 in G, K. 453. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 27 in B-flat, K. 595.** Hans Henkemans (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3117) \$3.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

Mozart: Concerto No. 14 in E-flat, K. 449. One side, and **R. Strauss: Burleske.** Friedrich Gulda (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1158) \$3.98.

Mozart: Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, K. 622. Leopold Wlach (clarinet) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Artur Rodzinski. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto in B-flat for Bassoon and Orchestra, K. 191.** Karl Oehlberger (bassoon) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5307) \$5.95.

Just how appealing the coupling of Mozart and Strauss will prove to be to fanciers of piano concertos is something only time and the sales records of this disc will prove. Being a reviewer, we take them as we get them. The matter of coupling aside, it must be reported promptly that each of these works is well played and mighty well reproduced. Gulda's reading is easily the equal of Badura-Skoda or Istomin, who are the other gentlemen represented in the LP catalogs with this work. Gulda's accompaniment and the reproduction accorded the performance are also from the top drawer, which would make this a recommended version of a delightful Mozart piano concerto. With the Strauss *Burleske* we come into competition with several other versions, but they must all be relegated to subordinate positions if for nothing more than the magnificence of London's reproduction. Here we have a full orchestra and solo piano recorded with balance and fidelity that is a pleasure to hear. Gulda scampers through the piano part nicely and plays it with unusual clarity; very clean playing, and the reproduction reveals it well.

Westminster appears with a record containing the same two concertos just issued by London. Both have good artists, outstanding conductors and orchestra and fine reproduction. Which to choose? Clarinetists and bassoonists will listen to both and select the one they think is the better player of the instrument. Mozarteans will do well to hear both and decide on a basis of who plays the best accompaniment—or who has better reproduction for their phonograph. Rodzinski's accompaniments are plenty big for Mozart, but the playing is accurate and stylish; Collins is a bit more conservative. Westminster's reproduction is a shade edgier, but it is very clear. A choice between these really gets down to fine points. S.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18. Leonard Pennario (piano) with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CLP-8302) \$4.98.

Rachmaninoff: (5) Pieces, Op. 3. And Rachmaninoff: Polka de W. R. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: (7) Pieces, Op. 10.** Nadia Reisenberg (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5344) \$5.95.

Capitol has very likely produced another winner

with this recording of the popular Rachmaninoff *Second Concerto*. Leonard Pennario has been forging a sizable series of good piano recordings, for this young man is one of the brightest stars among the coming piano virtuosi in our country, and he has a fast growing band of admirers. This disc will add to his stature as an artist, as well as to Capitol's list of best selling records. Pennario's reading is not so flashy nor hard-driven as the Kapell version, nor is the reproduction as cold and clanky. We would therefore prefer it to Kapell; but then there are two others of formidable standing among disc versions of this work. Rachmaninoff and Stokowski made what most folks admit is a hard-to-better version; and everyone admits by now that the reproduction is virtually unacceptable by today's standards. Rubinstein's recording has always been regarded as tops, although its reproduction is not as desirable as the present Pennario disc (by chance Golschmann provided Rubinstein's accompaniment too). Our preferences for the *Second* are Rubinstein or Pennario—and if you must have still another to choose from, there is Geza Anda, whose recent record proved to be excellent.

The collection of Rachmaninoff's solo piano music is a welcome addition to the disc repertoire. Opus 3 includes *THE Prelude in C sharp minor* and the tricky *Polichinelle*. Most of the music will be unfamiliar to many folks, although pianists will recall many an hour spent with some of these gems. Rachmaninoff was not only a great pianist, he was also a composer who knew well how to write for his chosen instrument. Nadia Reisenberg, a distinguished American pianist born in Russia, does quite well by this music, although we have heard better performances of the war-horse of the lot, *THE Prelude in You-Know-What*. She is at her best in the songful passages and lighter portions. Westminster's reproduction is good—it was recorded in New York, and should be quite effective on hi-fi equipment. S.

Dvorák: Concerto in B minor, Op. 104. Tibor de Machula (violoncello) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. One and one-half sides, and **Bruch: Kol Nidrei, Op. 47.** Tibor de Machula (violoncello) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3083) \$3.98.

In March we paid high tribute to the playing of Tibor de Machula's rendition of Lalo's *Cello Concerto* and Bloch's *Schelomo*. This praise is not now retracted. However, his performance of the lovely Dvorák *Concerto* is wide of the mark, it seems to us; and we are as prone to blame the reproduction as we are the artist. He seems lost in the orchestra, only the solo measures coming through unsmeared, so to speak; and Machula does not seem at his best. Our personal preference remains Janigro (*WEST-WL-5225) or Casals (*V-LCT-1026). Both the reproduction and artistry displayed in the *Kol Nidrei* are decidedly superior; and these are the same forces that performed for us in the Lalo, referred to above.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Schubert: Sonata in A minor ("Arpeggione"). One side, and **Boccherini: Sonata No. 6 in A**. And **Sammartini: Sonata in G**. Leonard Rose (violin-cello) and Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4984) \$3.98.

Tartini: Sonata in G minor ("The Devil's Trill"). Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin) and Heinz Wehrle (harpsichord). One side, and **Geminiani: Sonata in B-flat**. Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin). And **Vitali: Chaconne**. Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin) and Heinz Wehrle (organ). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1170) \$5.95.

An arpeggione was an instrument shaped and fretted like a guitar but played with a bow, and so far as is known, the present Schubert *Sonata* is the only work ever written for it. The arpeggione has, of course, passed out of existence, and the 'cello is generally used to play this charming little *Sonata*. Leonard Rose and Leonid Hambro play it as well as any of the other half dozen competitors.

The Sammartini, Tartini and Geminiani Sonatas exhibit lovely Italianate melodies which make them most ingratiating, "The Devil's Trill" being a particular favorite of ours. Vitali's *Chaconne for Violin and Figured Bass* will prove interesting to many for its unusual instrumentation on this Concert Hall disc; we don't ever recall having heard a combination of violin and organ before, but as demonstrated by the talented young Odnoposoff and equally so Wehrle, these instruments sound very well together.

Schumann: Quartet in F, Op. 41, No. 2. One side, and **Schumann: Quartet in A, Op. 41, No. 3**. New Music String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4982) \$3.98.

Schumann: Quartet in A minor, Op. 41, No. 1. One side, and **Schumann: Quartet in A, Op. 41, No. 3**. Curtis String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5166) \$5.95.

Schumann's String Quartets have been somewhat neglected by the LP manufacturers, and it is to be noted that the above brace of discs contain exactly half of the total number of recordings of the three quartets of Op. 41. Aside from Columbia's very, very slight edge in the matter of reproduction, there is little to choose between the playing of the New Music Quartet and the Curtis group; if you wish all three numbers of Op. 41 without any duplications, you must choose the Westminster plus *L-LL-323, which contains No. 2 plus a good reading of Verdi's little-known *Quartet in E minor*. But if you do not mind owning two very excellent interpretations of No. 3, you will be well advised to select both of these discs in securing the complete Op. 41.

OPERA



50 Years of Great Operatic Singing. 5-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6701) \$29.95.

CONTENTS: Examples of the operatic singing of Tamagno, Battistini, Plançon Patti, Sembrich, Melba, Caruso, Scotti, Amato, Renaud, Calvé, Farrar, Marsh, Matzenauer, Clément, Destinn, Hempel, Muzio, McCormack, Alda, Ruffo, Slezak, Gigli, Garden, Austral, Martinelli, Ponselle, Chaliapin, Galli-Curci, Onegin, Koshetz, Schipa, Pinza, Lemnitz, Leider, Melchior, Flagstad, Kipnis, Ruziczka, Pons, Rethberg, Tibbett, Bampton, Bjoerling, Raisa, Souez, Maynor, Traubel, Warren, Teyte, Milanov, Elmo, Albanese, Merrill, Steber, Stevens, Novotna, and Peerce.

"Once in the dear dead days beyond recall . . ." so goes the old song; but, happily for the dyed-in-the-wool phonophile, they can be recalled. There have been other LP discs devoted to the art of singers of yesteryear; but naturally, RCA Victor has the greatest collection of old masters, so this most recent addition to its Treasury Series, *50 Years of Great Operatic Singing*, is one that was fraught with the greatest possibilities.

First some statistics; there are 69 selections from 49 different operas; there are 41 arias or concerted numbers from 28 Italian operas, 18 from 12 French works, 6 from 6 German operas and 3 miscellaneous pieces. Verdi leads all composers with 15 selections from 10 operas, Puccini is next with 6 from 4 and Mozart 6 from 2. 25 of the selections are acoustically recorded, 44 electrically. Among the artists, Caruso appears 7 times, Martinelli and Sembrich 3 times each, a few others twice, but the majority only once.

Outstanding performances are Plançon's *Elle ne m'aime pas* from "Don Carlo," Caruso's "Favorita" and "Macbeth" excerpts, Gigli's 1922 version of *Un di all'azzurro spazio* from "Andrea Chenier," Slezak's "Queen of Sheba" (Goldmark) aria, Martinelli's *O muto asil* from "William Tell" among the acoustical recordings. Among the electrics, the final trio from "La Forza del Destino" (Ponselle, Martinelli and Pinza), *En vain pour éviter* from "Carmen" by Mary Garden, Ina Souez' fabulous *Ernani involami* and Jan Peerce's dramatic *Fra poco mi ricovero* ("Lucia") are outstanding.

The disappointments, mainly because one expected so much more, perhaps, were Patti's *Don Giovanni* excerpt ("Batti, batti"), Melba's mad scene from *Hamlet*, Caruso's early *Non Pagilaccio non son*, McCormack's "Carmen" duet (with Marsh), Freda Leider's "Don Giovanni" aria *Or sai che l'onore* and arias by Risë Stevens ("Nozze di Figaro") and Bjoerling ("Trovatore" and "Turandot").

As is always the case with an anthology, one can pick his own particular flaws—where are some of the fabulous Meyerbeer operas recorded by Matzenauer, Journet, Clement, et al.? In fact, where is Journet?

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 O Indicates 45 rpm.

(The answer is, probably, on other Treasury series recordings). But what about Anseau? Zenatello? Mardones? Bori?

One might, in fact does, ask—what does the set prove? Well, for one thing it proves what Irving Kolodin liked (out of what was available). It also demonstrates, at least for the writer, that some of the older singers, insofar as musicianship was concerned, do not please at all (Patti and Melba, for example). One could easily come to the ironical (almost blasphemous) conclusion from these records that Peerce is a better tenor than Caruso was! In all events, he is a far better musician. From this it can easily be gathered that the present collection of singers does not answer the question as to what is "great" operatic singing for your servant.

Obviously, all the foregoing opinions are strictly subjective and must be considered as such. Objectively speaking, the set is handsomely bound; there are copious notes and photographs, and the transfer of the old matrices to LP has been very well engineered. For young collectors who do not have many old records the present set will prove both a valuable addition to the library as well as a liberal education.

Inasmuch as the edition is a "limited" one, it is suggested that interested parties investigate fairly promptly. W.

Menotti: The Saint of Bleeker Street. (Sung in English). Gabrielle Ruggiero (soprano), Gloria Lane (mezzo-soprano), David Poleri (tenor); chorus and orchestra conducted by Thomas Schippers. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6032) \$7.98.

The long-awaited recording of Gian-Carlo Menotti's *The Saint of Bleeker Street* is now with us. This work won the 1954 Drama Critics' Circle Award (as the best musical) and the Music Critics' Circle Award (as the best opera); and more recently it won the Pulitzer Prize for Music. An excerpt from Act II was given on Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town" TV show, and the complete work was televised on 15 May over NBC. Its European premiere was given on 10 May at La Scala, Milan. There is little that this humble critic can add to the accolades and publicity already given this musical drama; Mr. Menotti has given us a great score and a poignant and believable story, and Mr. Schippers has led his forces in a thrilling performance on this pair of LP discs, captured in every nuance by RCA Victor's expert engineers.

Menotti does not call *The Saint* an opera, but a musical drama; there is no talking, but neither are there any arias—it is all recitative and chorus. The story concerns Annina, sung by Gabrielle Ruggiero, who is evidently ill and who hears voices from heaven. She has visions, and when she has them she bleeds at the points on her body where the nails would have pierced her, had she been crucified; and the neighbors believe that, when she has these visions and the stigmata appear, she has curing powers. Michele,

Annina's brother, sung by David Poleri, doesn't believe in these "superstitions," thinks the neighbors are foolish, and objects strenuously to Annina's desire to become a nun. In the opening scene one of these visions is realistically depicted, and in the second scene we learn of the hatred of the neighbors for Michele, who would not let Annina take part in a procession of the Sons of San Gennaro.

Act II opens with the wedding of Carmela, Annina's best friend who had promised at one time to take the veil with Annina, to Salvatore. Desideria, in the person of Gloria Lane, Michele's lover of questionable reputation, appears; and since she was the only person in the neighborhood not invited to the wedding, she convinces Michele that if he loved her, he'd take her inside to the reception. Michele, by this time inflamed with drink and desire, tries to take Desideria inside, realizing full well that he will further incite the crowd against him. When Michele responds to Annina's wish that he not take his paramour in, Desideria accuses Michele of incestuous love for Annina, whereupon Michele stabs Desideria and escapes.

In the last Act we find Annina near death, confronted by Michele, who has thus far dodged the police. Annina refuses to be held back from taking her nun's vows any longer; and just as the ceremony is completed, Annina dies.

Menotti tells a powerful story and has supplied music which heightens the drama. We can say, from experience, that you need not have seen *The Saint of Bleeker Street* to appreciate this new Victor set; but if you have seen it, either live or on television, you will not be let down on hearing the recorded version. It is an almost perfect job and receives our warmest praise. J.

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Zinka Milanov and Roberta Peters (sopranos); Marian Anderson (contralto); Jan Peerce (tenor); Leonard Warren (baritone); and the Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Company conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1911) \$3.98.

Hard on the heels of RCA Victor's complete recording of Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* comes this issue of highlights, featuring the Ulrica of Marian Anderson.

First things first, so one must consider Miss Anderson's performance of Ulrica's air *Re dell' abisso affrettati*. Despite one's wholehearted admiration for both the singer and the woman, one is still faced with an incontrovertible fact—Miss Anderson's voice is not what it once was, and this is demanding music. She does exhibit a fine sense of the theatre however, and her expression and ability to create the required atmosphere are very convincing. One listens with mixed feelings and wishes that Marian Anderson could have had her opportunity some ten or fifteen years ago.

The other singers in the cast are familiar to most opera lovers. Miss Milanov has few peers in this sort of music; her singing of Amelia's two arias, *Ma dall' arido stella divulsa* and *Morò, ma prima in grazia* is productive of many a thrill. She is joined by Jan Peerce in the magnificent love duet, *Teco io sto*, and both sing the music to the hilt. Mr. Peerce also sings the third act aria *Ma se m'è forza perdeti* in his accustomed fiery fashion. Leonard Warren's contribution is in the form of two arias, *Alla vita che t'arride* and the familiar *Eri tu?*. Miss Roberta Peters is agile but little else in the once famous *Saper voreste*. Dimitri Mitropoulos directs in a forceful manner and provides tempi and support for his singers in musically fashion. W.

After hearing the blazing Toscanini recording, however, this one sounds a little pale; but for those who do not care for the complete opera, the present disc should provide a good sampling of the work. The real significance of the record, however, is that it is now RCA Victor who will be doing the "official" Metropolitan Opera Association recordings. W.

Puccini: La Rondine (complete). (Sung in Italian).

Giacinto Prandelli (tenor), Vladimiro Pagano (baritone), supporting soloists and the Antonio Guarneri Orchestra and Chorus of Milan conducted by Federico del Cupolo. 2-12" discs in box (*C-EL-12) \$3.96.

Puccini's little known and seldom performed "waltz opera," *La Rondine*, here receives its first recording. In fact, except for two isolated arias on 78 rpm discs (one by Bori, the other by Kirsten) it has received no phonographic attention at all, a surprising circumstance in view of Puccini's great popularity.

La Rondine ("The Swallow") had its American premiere on March 10, 1928, almost eleven years to the day from the World premiere in Monte Carlo (27 March 1917). The principals in the Metropolitan production were Lucrezia Bori and Beniamino Gigli; the conductor was Vincenzo Bellezza. It achieved a total of ten performances during the next three seasons and then disappeared from the repertory until 1936 when Miss Bori unaccountably chose it for her farewell. On nearly every occasion when the opera has been given it has been well received, but for some reason it never became really popular. W. J. Henderson, writing in the *New York Sun*, stated, "*La Rondine* is neither grand opera nor the kind of comic opera familiar to this town. . . . This stray blossom of Puccini's fancy is likely to be blasted by misunderstanding. It must be accepted for what it is and not damned for being something else. . . . It is the afternoon off of a genius."

The performance recorded here is a fair one. Giacinto Prandelli, an excellent tenor, sings very well as Ruggero, and Eva de Luca matches his performance as the demi-mondaine, Magda. The other mem-

bers of the long cast are mediocre, having adequate or less than adequate voices and understanding of their roles. Federico del Cupolo's direction is pedestrian as its poorest, mildly inspired at its best.

In view of the excellent packaging, the finely printed libretto, and the copious notes, the reasonably good sound and the very modest price tag, it is suggested that the prospective purchaser can hardly go wrong despite some of the set's artistic and musical deficiencies. W.

Verdi Recital. Cesare Siepi (bass) with the Orchestra of l'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9168) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Don Carlos*—Ella giammai m'amo; *Nabucco*—Vieni, o Levita (recit.).... Tu sul labbro dei veggenti (aria); *Ernani*—Che mai veggio (recit.).... Infelice! e tuo credevi.

Famous Tenor Arias. Cesare Valletti (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50176) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Lucia di Lammermoor*—Tu che a Dio & Tombe degli avi miei; *Don Giovanni*—Il mio tesoro & Dalla sua pace; *Werther*—Pourquoi me réveiller & O nature; *Manon*—La rêve & Ah! fuyez, douce image.

Wagner Arias. Hans Hopf (tenor) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3103) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Lohengrin*—Nun sei bedankt, mein lieber Schwan!; *Höchstes Vertrau'n*; In fernem Land. *Die Meistersinger*—Am stillen Herd; Fanget an!; *Morgenlich leuchtend*. *Rienzi*—Allmächt'ger Vater, blick' herab; *Die Walküre*—Winterstürme; *Der fliegende Holländer*—Willst jenestags & Dunichts dich mehr Entsinnen.

LP discs of operatic arias can be very confusing things. Here we have three such items devoted, respectively, to Verdi, an Italian tenor and Wagner. The result is one of those mixed blessings one so frequently encounters in this imperfect world.

Cesare Siepi, from whom one expected much more, sings the Verdi arias in a dreary fashion. Granted that King Phillip was depressed as he sang the famous soliloquy concerning his discovery that his wife never loved him is no reason for Siepi showing no spirit at all. The same holds true for the rousing (when sung by other basses, notably Christoff) *Infelice*. The *Nabucco* excerpt is such beautiful music that one is almost tempted to overlook the singer's apathy. Routine is the kindest word for Siepi; dutiful, the word for conductor Erede.

Valetti essays a group of Mozart, Massenet and Donizetti. The Mozart is unimaginative, the Donizetti mediocre and the Massenet pathetic. Honestly, the scene *Ah, fuyez douce image* is just too much for Valetti's light tenor. He has a terrible time of it, and so does the listener. This is a shame, for Valetti has a very acceptable voice (to wit, the recent recording

of *L'Italiana in Algeri*) when he, like the shoemaker, sticks to his last. The *Lucia* music, recorded in reverse as it were for reasons best known to Cetra (the finale comes before the aria *Fra poco mi ricovero*) suffers from mock heroics and from the lack of a supporting bass soloist and a chorus in the finale. Cetra (or someone) thought so little of director Basile's contribution to the affair that his name is not even mentioned on the jacket.

The Wagner disc is far and away the best of the three (which is not saying an awful lot, is it?) since Hans Hopf has, so far as this group of discs is concerned, the strange idea that a singer should sing with some understanding of the music and words. This record then, to be brief, is a fine one; Hopf sings very well, and Moralt backs him up in fine style. Epic also supplies texts, although neither of the other companies bothered. Recording is fair for London, poor on Cetra and very good on the Epic. W.

Great Love Duets. Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Richard Tucker (tenor) with The Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association of New York conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4981) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *La Bohème*—Che gelida manina, Si mi chiamano Mimi, O soave fanciulla, Quando me'n vo' soletta, Addio a Mimi; *Manon Lescaut*—In quelle trine morbide, Tu tu amore, Sola perduta abbandonata; *Manon*—Toi! Vous!

Record reviewers have seldom criticized the voice of Richard Tucker, for it is a fine one; not a few have remarked that he has a tendency to be "hammy" and to over-act, which is, after all, a question of personal preference. This over-emotion may not be suited to recordings of complete operas; but we are not so sure that a certain amount of it is not required in operatic recitals, such as the present disc, and therefore when Mr. Tucker teams with Dorothy Kirsten to offer some of the most popular arias and duets in Italian opera, we will overlook this tendency in Mr. Tucker and just admire the well-produced voices.

CHORAL



Bruckner: Te Deum. (Sung in Latin). Frances Yeend (soprano), Martha Lipton (mezzo-soprano), David Lloyd (tenor), Mack Harrell (baritone), the Westminster Choir directed by John Finley Williamson and the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. One side, and **Mahler: Kindertotenlieder.** (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter (TNR Sept. '51). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4980) \$5.95.

The present disc, a happy combination of Bruckner and Mahler directed by Bruno Walter, reaches a high point in the recorded performances of each composer's work.

The Mahler songs, issued previously on a ten inch disc, sound even better in this new pressing and gain much by being heard without interruption. The original disc was favorably reviewed in the Sept. 1951 issue of THE NEW RECORDS.

The Bruckner *Te Deum*, a new recording, is a fine, exciting presentation of the composer's only essay in this form. It was first given on 10 January 1886. Later, in his declining years, Bruckner is said to have expressed a wish that the *Te Deum* be used as a finale to his *Ninth Symphony*, if he should not live to finish it. As we know, Bruckner did die before the completion of the *Ninth Symphony*, but the great length of three completed movements precluded the use of the *Te Deum* as a last movement. Both works, however, are dedicated to God, and this is nothing more or less than Bruckner's honest devotion, both to his art and his Maker.

The *Te Deum* also reveals another facet of Bruckner's religious nature. "Bruckner took literally," writes the biographer, M. Auer, "the words of the Psalmist, 'Praise ye Him with drums and cymbals.' He displays a splendor and brilliance in his orchestral and choral color combinations which is comparable to the glow of the glorious color in Rubens paintings...."

Bruno Walter, the soloists and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra realize all the brilliance of the score and give a performance that is both dramatic and devotional. The recorded sound is good in both instances, and scholarly notes have been supplied. Also included are the texts and translations of both works. W.



VOCAL

Schubert Recital No. 2. Gérard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Dalton Baldwin (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1148) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *An die Leyer*, Op. 56, No. 2; *Der Schmetterling*, Op. 57, No. 1; *Du bist die Ruh'*, Op. 59, No. 3; *Geheimes*, Op. 14, No. 2; *Der Atlas*; *Das Rosenband*; *Der Musensohn*, Op. 92, No. 1; *Ständchen*; *Horch, horch, die Lerch'*; *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*, Op. 24, No. 1; *Litanei*; *Seligkeit*; *Nachtviolen*; *Abschied*.

A most welcome disc is this second Schubert *lieder* recital by the distinguished French baritone, Gérard Souzay. An earlier record by Souzay devoted to Schubert songs (TNR Aug. '53) was very favorably reviewed, and all that was written there can be doubled in spades, as the saying goes, for the present performances.

This recital opens with a song concerning which the astute Alfred Einstein wrote "(it) could well serve as a motto for the whole of Schubert's music by virtue of its complete and utter charm." The song is, of course, the singularly seldom recorded *An die Leyer* (usually misspelled *Leier*). To list all the other

gems recorded here would be redundant—but mention must be made of the wonderful *Du bist die Ruh'*, sung magnificently, and the more serious *Der Atlas*. The last song on side one is the ever delightful *Der Musensohn*, delivered here with just the right spirit and lightness of touch.

The other side opens with the familiar *Serenade* and includes the dramatic and timeless *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*, a moving and heartfelt version of the lovely *Litanei*, and, for a finale, Schubert's masterly setting of Rellstab's sadly humorous *Abscheid*, sung with rare insight and musical intelligence.

Insight and intelligence—these two words sum up the mental and emotional aspects of Gérard Souzay's art, while the mechanical part, his voice, is virtually perfect. One has the impression that M. Souzay never has to think of his voice, its production and so on—it is all so natural, and thus he is able to project the meaning of the words and the feeling of the song without interference, as it were, from the purely mechanical aspects of singing. Only great singers are able to do this.

Not only is this disc obviously highly recommended, but those who overlooked the earlier recital (*L-LS-655) are advised to get that one, too. W.

Handel: Apollo e Dafne. (Sung in Italian). Margaret Ritchie (soprano); Bruce Boyce (baritone); l'Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Anthony Lewis. 1-12" disc in box (*OL-50038) \$4.98.

The dramatic cantata *Apollo e Dafne* is an early work of Handel's, written during his stay in Italy and, of course, before his first visit to England. Opera in Italy at that time was under a Papal ban, so the music loving Italians had to be content with "concert versions," as it were, of dramatic music.

Apollo e Dafne is a thoroughly delightful work—Handel in his most melodious and lyric vein. There is, in this cantata, one of the most meltingly lovely arias he ever wrote. It is sung by Dafne—*Felicissima quest' alma*—accompanied by a solo oboe (superbly played here by Pierre Pierlot) with violins, violas and cellos pizzicato. Small wonder that Apollo, after hearing it, exclaims *Che voce! Che beltà! —Ninfa!* The rest of the music is equally fine and full of typically Handelian turns, which is another way of saying it is magnificent music.

Miss Ritchie sings the part of Dafne in a clear, high soprano that seems made to order for the music. Her approach to the score is distinguished by a sense of style that is both elegant and simple—it is a very moving performance.

Bruce Boyce also sings with distinction and a very pleasing baritone. His delivery is able and expressive; his contribution to the success of the performance is no small one.

Anthony Lewis directs the presentation in a brisk manner, never dragging, never rushing matters. In old music such as this there is always the possibility that it has been "edited" but if such is the case (the

notes make no mention of any "arrangement") whoever made it did so with respect and knowledge.

The recording is very fine indeed, and the Italian texts (but no translations) are furnished, as are some notes by conductor Lewis. Highly recommended.

W.

Spanish Songs. Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35208TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35208) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: (7) *Canciones populares españolas* (Falla); *Combat del Somni* (Mompou); *Romance de Solita* (Pittaluga); *Canciones Negras* (Montsalvatge); *Farruca, La Giralda* (Turina); *Corazon porque pasais, El majo celoso, Con amores la mi madre, Dos cantares populares, El vito* (Obradors).

Spanish music is getting quite a play these days, both literally and figuratively, and Angel offers a collection of songs by contemporary composers that should please admirers of this form of art. The writer must confess to being left a little cold by both the music and the poetry.

Falla's *Seven Popular Songs* have been recorded several times before and Miss Merriman has little new light to shed on them. The other composers, with the exception of Joaquín Turina (who has been represented on discs before), Mompou, Pittaluga, Montsalvatge and Obradors will be, in all probability, new to most listeners.

The music is characteristic and mostly "modern" in conception; that is, not too much outright melody—more on the impressionistic side. The texts are, usually, the inevitable love lyrics, but not happy in feeling.

Miss Merriman, who has a very nice mezzo-soprano, reels off the songs without much expression and with quite frequent use of unpleasant, at least for this writer, deep chest tones.

By and large this music is for the initiated although, since one has to begin sometime, this disc could readily serve as a first class introduction to the form.

There are excellent notes as well as the texts and translations of all the songs. Good sound. W.

Rosa Ponselle Sings Today. Rosa Ponselle (soprano) accompanied by Igor Chigagov (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1889) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Bois epais* (Lully); *Rosemonde* (Persico); *Guitares et Mandolines* (Saint-Saëns); *Le Temps des lilas* (Chausson); *Von ewiger Liebe*, Op. 43, No. 1 (Brahms); *Mir träumte von einem Königskind*, Op. 4, No. 5 (Trunk); *Erlkönig*, Op. 1 (Schubert); *In questa tomba* (Beethoven); *Rispetto* (Wolf-Ferrari); *O del mio amato ben* (Donaudy); *Aprile* (Tosti); *Amuri, amuri* (Sadéro); *I battitori di grano* (Sadéro); *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes* (Trad.); *The Night Wind* (Farley); *Homing* (del Riego).

In a world where operatic prima donnas have at

least several "farewell" tours, Rosa Ponselle's sudden and complete retirement from opera at the height of her career was both astonishing and regrettable. There has been much conjecture in the intervening 18 years (Miss Ponselle retired from the Metropolitan in 1937) concerning the quality of her voice; now RCA Victor's persistence has made possible a record of sixteen songs—and with today's astonishing fidelity one can judge her art pretty accurately, both vocal and interpretive, as of October 1954.

The recital opens with Lully's *Bois épais*, and it becomes apparent at once that the passing years have dealt very lightly with Ponselle's magnificent voice. The powerful lower register is as thrilling as ever, and the high notes are easily produced. Her art and sense of style are still the sure and superior attributes that they have always been.

Outstanding among the group of songs are the aforementioned *Bois épais*, *O del mio amato ben*, Tosti's ever lovely *Aprile* and, in a more dramatic vein, are an individualistic version of Schubert's *Erkönig* and a stirring *In questa tomba*. The other songs, some admittedly trivia, are raised almost to the level of good music by Miss Ponselle's unique ability to pour expression into them and by the matchless color of her voice.

Accompaniments are tastefully played by Igor Chicagov. The recorded sound, considering that the disc was made at Miss Ponselle's Villa Pace and not in a studio, is very good—hardly distinguishable, in fact, from a studio job.

This is certainly a disc to be prized by all admirers of Rosa Ponselle, by young singers who can learn by example and everyone interested in fine vocal musicianship. W.

Flagstad Recital. Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) accompanied by Edwin McArthur (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1870) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Die junge Nonne*, Op. 43, No. 1; *Die Liebe hat gelogen*, Op. 23, No. 1; *Die Post*; *Der Wegweiser* (Schubert). *Liebestreu*, Op. 3, No. 1; *Meine Liebe ist grün*, Op. 63, No. 5; *Sind es Schmerzen, sind es Freuden*, Op. 33, No. 3 (Brahms). *Wiegenlied*, Op. 41a, No. 1; *Allerseelen*, Op. 10, No. 8; *Zueignung*, Op. 10, No. 1; *Due meines Herzens Krönelein*, Op. 21, No. 2; *Ach Lieb' ich muss nun scheiden*, Op. 21, No. 3 (R. Strauss). *Night* (McArthur). *A Song for Lovers*, Op. 13, No. 2 (Taylor). *Sea Moods* (Tyson).

The art of Kirsten Flagstad has legions of admirers in this country, and for them it suffices to say that here is a new Flagstad *lieder* record. The glorious voice is still very much in evidence, although one notices a slight tendency to push for high tops that once came easily—but the slight resultant tremolo may readily be overlooked.

The writer always had a few doubts where Mme. Flagstad was concerned in the matter of interpretation.

A certain coldness or detachment always prevented her from fully realizing all the poetry and music of either the role or the song she was singing. In the present recital the same deficiency of temperament (call it what you will) is in evidence, particularly in the Schubert *lieder*, to a lesser extent in the Brahms and is almost gone in the Strauss. Perhaps it is a lack of sympathy for the "romantic" Schubert?

It is curious that RCA Victor offers no data whatsoever concerning the record. The original texts of the songs are printed (no translations), and there is a very attractive likeness of Kirsten Flagstad on the jacket cover. But nothing as to when the recital was made or where (presumably recently and in this country, but that is only the writer's guess).

The recorded sound falls pleasantly on the ear, and the music, with the exception of the last three songs, is good, too. W.

Schubert: Die Winterreise. (Sung in German). And **Schubert: Die Schöne Müllerin.** (Sung in German). Inez Matthews (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Lowell Farr (piano). 2-12" and 1-7" discs in album (*PE-SPL-713/4) \$9.96.

This set of records poses a pretty problem for the reviewer. These two song cycles are usually sung by men; and the men are almost always baritones. There have been exceptions, however. Lotte Lehmann made a recording of *Die Winterreise* and Elena Gerhardt also recorded portions of it. Nevertheless, one feels the music was written for the male voice, and certainly the texts are "for men only."

Now, when one is confronted with *both* cycles sung by a mezzo soprano, it becomes difficult; and when the mezzo is Inez Matthews, well—Miss Matthews has one of the most beautiful voices around today. She sings easily, with perfect production and control—one has nothing but praise for her vocal quality.

Why not, then, just say the cycles are wonderfully sung and leave it at that? Because Miss Matthews just is not able to achieve the variety of expression for a successful projection of the songs. After all, there are forty-four songs in the two cycles; and to give expression and feeling to each song is a colossal job, one that few singers have been able to do satisfactorily. Certainly one needs to bring more to the occasion than a beautiful voice.

The foregoing may seem a little unkind, but the writer is only trying to be fair. After all, he knows the cycles can be sung in a way that places them among the most inspired of musical utterances (e.g., Hüsch on the old 78's and Fischer-Dieskau on LP); the present performances are technically good but artistically colorless.

Period's recording is fine; since the last four songs of *Die Winterreise* would not fit on the 12" disc, they have been placed on a 7" record that is supplied free. A booklet giving texts and translations is also included. W.

Memories of the Vienna Theatre (Vol. I). Hilde Gueden (soprano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Schönherr. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9157) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Wiener Blut*—*Wiener Blut* muss was eignes sein; *Grüss Dich Gott, du liebes Nesterl. Die Fledermaus*—*Entr'act. Sissy*—Ich wär so gern einmal verliebt. *Gräfin Mariza*—Introduction and Chorus. *Der tabfere Soldat*—Komm' Held meiner Träume. *Madame Pompadour*—Heut' könnt' einer sein Glück. *Die Dollarprinzessin*—Automobil marsch. *Zigeunerliebe*—Hör ich Cymbalklänge.

Memories of the Vienna Theatre (Vol. II). Hilde Gueden (soprano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Schönherr. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9158) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Hoheit tanzt Walzer*—Man nennt mich nur das Lercherl. *Der Schatzmeister*—Waltz motive; *Der Zarewitsch*—Introduction & Kosende Wellen. *Schön ist die Welt*—Introduction & Ich bin verliebt. *Rund um die Liebe*—Overture (Introduction). *Die lustige Witwe*—Lippen schweigen; Waltz motive. *Ein Walzertraum*—Leise, ganz leise. *Wiener Blut*—Overture (Introduction); Introduction and *Wiener Blut* muss was eignes sein. *Die Tänzerin Fanny Elssler*—Draussen in Sievering.

Those of us who have lived in Vienna will readily understand what this disc is all about. But we hope that those of us who have not will not hesitate to sample these discs, because anyone who likes light, sparklingly gay music will enjoy them. If the Telephone Hour originated from Vienna, these are the sorts of things you'd hear on it, sung by just such a soprano as Hilde Gueden, who is to the manner born.

NOTE: Examine the jackets label these two as Volumes 1 and 2, respectively, the labels say Volumes 2 and 3; the selections listed on the jackets, however, agree with those on the label.

PIANO



Debussy Piano Music. Robert Casadesus (piano). 3-12" discs in box (*C-SL-222) \$11.94.

CONTENTS: *Préludes* (Bks I & II); *Images* (Bks I & II); *Estantes*; *Masques*; *L'Isle Joyeuse*; *Deux Arabesques*; *Children's Corner Suite*; *En Blanc et Noir* (with Gaby Casadesus); (6) *Epigraphes Antiques* (with Gaby Casadesus).

Debussy: (12) Etudes (Bks I & II). Hans Henkemans (piano). 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3104) \$3.98.

This otherwise magnificent set of Debussy records by Robert Casadesus, joined toward the end by his illustrious sister, starts out with two strikes against it so far as we are concerned. It is a personal thing, and perhaps it should not weigh so large with us. But we have decried the fanfare about high fidelity,

feeling that a good many manufacturers were latching on to a good thing and calling records and phonographs "hi-fi" when they weren't, really. This album bears the inscription "A High Fidelity Recording Designed and Engineered at Columbia Sound Laboratories." Sound-wise, it lacks not a little of being high fidelity. We have no objection to non hi-fi discs; and surely great interpretations, such as M. Casadesus is able to give these lovely Debussy pieces, makes this set a worthwhile effort. But we must take exception to mis-labeled records; this sound is passable and is about as good as most early LP's (and no better nor worse than the Giesecking recordings of much of this same material).

Collectors desiring these works must choose between Giesecking and Casadesus, and the choice will not be easy, different as the two approaches are. Giesecking is more poetic and takes greater liberties with the score; Casadesus is more the technician, probably more accurate in reflecting the desires of the composer. We have Giesecking and will not make the change; but we most assuredly could not criticize those who will choose Casadesus in the future.

Epic does much better in reproducing the piano than does Columbia, and Hans Henkemans performs the *Etudes* in a most satisfactory manner.

Chopin: (17) Mazurkas. William Kapell (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1865) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Mazurkas* No. 2 in C-sharp minor, Op. 6 No. 2; No. 6 in A minor, Op. 7, No. 2; No. 11 in E minor, Op. 17, No. 2; No. 12 in A-flat, Op. 17, No. 3; No. 20 in D-flat, Op. 30, No. 3; No. 22 in G-sharp minor, Op. 33, No. 1; No. 26 in C-sharp minor, Op. 41, No. 1; No. 27 in E minor, Op. 41, No. 2; No. 31 in A-flat, Op. 50, No. 2; No. 32 in C-sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 3; No. 36 in A minor, Op. 59, No. 1; No. 37 in A-flat, Op. 59, No. 2; No. 40 in F minor, Op. 63, No. 2; No. 41 in C-sharp minor, Op. 63, No. 3; No. 43 in G minor, Op. 67, No. 2; No. 47 in A minor, Op. 68, No. 2; No. 50 in A minor ("Notre Temps").

Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35 ("Funeral March"). One side, and **Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58.** Julius Katchen (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1163) \$3.98.

Among the last recordings made by William Kapell before his untimely death were these seventeen *Mazurkas* (recorded in 1952). That Mr. Kapell was an exceptional pianist was well known to concertgoers, and this disc will demonstrate that fact to anyone who has never heard him.

The young Julius Katchen has certainly made a name for himself, via London records and concert appearances, and justly so. He tackles these extremely popular Chopin Sonatas as though his would be the only recording of them (a logical approach!) and produces twenty-four karat performances which exhibit his nimble-fingered technique, mirrored with proper perspective by frrr reproduction.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø indicates 45 rpm.

Schubert: Sonata in B-flat, Op. Posth. One side, and **Beethoven: Rondo in G, Op. 51, No. 2.** And **Beethoven: Bagatelle in A minor ("Für Elise").** And **Beethoven: Rondo a Capriccio, Op. 129.** Willard MacGregor (piano). 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-200) \$2.98.

Schubert: (4) Impromptus. One side, and **Debussy: (5) Pieces.** Willard MacGregor (piano). 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-201) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Impromptus No. 1 in C minor, No. 2 in E-flat, No. 3 in G-flat, No. 4 in A-flat* (Schubert); *La Cathédrale engloutie, La Puerta del Vino, General Lavine—Eccentric, Hommage à Rameau, Réflexes dans l'eau* (Debussy).

(NOTE: See editorial of May 1955 issue for special introductory offer.)

Willard MacGregor's name was new to us, but his talents are at once recognizable upon hearing these discs. We learn from the jacket notes that he has concertized both at home and abroad, that he studied under Boulanger and Schnabel, and that he performed the world premiere of Hindemith's *Ludus Tonalis*; his recitals have been enthusiastically received.

He performs the Beethoven and Schubert pieces on the present discs in fine fashion; and while we do not take exception to his Debussy interpretations, there will be some who will, for he lacks what, for want of a better word, we will call "dreaminess." This lack does not make the readings any less valid; but they are different. Reproduction is fine; even the slightly noticed shrillness of other Kingsway discs is gone.

Rachmaninoff: (5) Pieces, Op. 3. And **Rachmaninoff: Polka de W. R.** One side, and **Rachmaninoff: (7) Pieces, Op. 10.** Nadia Reisenberg (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5344) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.

HARPSICHORD



Scarlatti: (60) Sonatas. Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). 4-12" discs in box (*C-SL-221) \$15.92.

There are over 550 surviving sonatas from the pen of Domenico Scarlatti, and Ralph Kirkpatrick has selected 60 for this album "... that I felt I most wanted to play. The final choice presents a balanced selection ... from each of the principal periods of Scarlatti's mature harpsichord style."

Mr. Kirkpatrick, in addition to expert and sympathetic performances, supplies over six pages of notes, giving a brief biography, a Preface indicating his selection, instructions on how to play the records (not too loud, please), a description of the harpsichord used, and a commentary on the sonatas chosen. A very fine album dedicated to the most original

keyboard composer of his century by one of the outstanding harpsichordists of our time.



DICTION

Poet's Gold (Vol. I). Readings by Helen Hayes, Raymond Massey and Thomas Mitchell. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1812) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *The Day Is Done, The Children's Hour, Paul Revere's Ride* (Longfellow); *A Child's Laughter* (Swinburne); *The Lamb, The Tiger* (Blake); *Happy Thought, Whole Duty of Children, Good and Bad Children, My Shadow, The Land of Counterpane* (Stevenson); *Concord Hymn* (Emerson); *O Captain! My Captain!, There Was a Child Went Forth* (Whitman); *Barbara Frietchie* (Whittier); *The Deacon's Masterpiece* (Holmes); *Little Boy Blue* (Field); *The Owl and the Pussy Cat* (Lear); *Jabberwocky* (Carroll); *The Law of the Jungle* (Kipling); *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (Coleridge).

Poet's Gold (Vol. II). Readings by Helen Hayes, Raymond Massey and Thomas Mitchell. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1813) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (Fitzgerald); *Ode on a Grecian Urn, On First Looking into Chapman's Homer, On Seeing the Elgin Marbles* (Keats); *The Ballad of the Harp-Weaver* (Millay); *The Raven* (Poe); *The Fiddler of Dooney, The Lake Isle of Innisfree, When You Are Old* (Yeats); *My Last Duchess* (Browning); *Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard* (Gray); *The Battle of Blenheim* (Southey); *Tomlinson, Recessional* (Kipling); *Battle Hymn of the Republic* (Howe).

Poet's Gold (Vol. III). Readings by Geraldine Brooks and Norman Rose. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1883) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Theory of Poetry* (MacLeish); *Peter Quince at the Clavier* (Stevens); *Elsa Wertman, Jonathan Houghton* (Masters); *Light of Love, Love Song* (Parker); *Miniver Cheevy, Richard Cory* (Robinson); *Lines to a World-Famous Poet Who Failed to Complete a World-Famous Poem, or Come Clean, Mr. Guest!* (Nash); *Disturbers of the Peace, Springtime Crosstown Episode in Four Time, Village Revisited* (White); *The Little Serving Maid, The Place of Silence, (Belloc); Song for the Last Act, To an Artist: To Take Heart* (Bogan); *Five Finger Exercises: Lines to a Yorkshire Terrier, Lines to Ralph Hodgson, Esq., Lines to Cuscutaraway* (Eliot); *The Rock—Chorus* (Eliot); *The Beauty of Things* (Jeffers); *Notes Written on a Damp Veranda, Ballade of Lost Objects, Midcentury Love Letter* (McGinley); *If I Could Only Live at the Pitch That Is Near to Madness, The Human Being Is a Lonely Creature* (Eberhart); *Musée des Beaux Arts, The Average, O What Is That Sound Which So Thrills*

the Ear (Auden); *O Boys! O Boys, The Three: Faith, Hope, Charity* (Gogarty); *Sheltered Garden* (Doolittle); *Lament, Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night* (Thomas).

The first two volumes of this ambitious offering by RCA Victor need little comment here; the poems and speakers are quite well known, and it is necessary only to state that the reproduction is, in every way, above reproach.

Volume III will probably contain poems new to any but a well-read scholar. They were selected by Whit Burnett, who intended to show examples of many contemporary poets. Miss Brooks and Mr. Rose read their lines with zest, sympathy, reflection or whatever the occasion demands; and, if you like to hear poetry read and find very many of your favorite authors here, you will find Volume III quite to your liking.

Marivaux: Les Fausses Confidences. (Read in French). Madeleine Renaud and Jean-Louis Barault with supporting cast. 2-12" discs in box (*L-TW-91042/3) \$9.96.

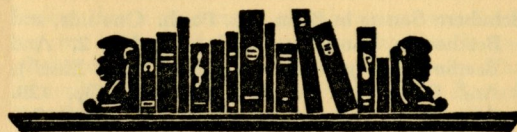
Ces disques s'achèteraient par les Françaises, parce qu'il n'y a pas un mot anglais sur l'un ou l'autre. Les notes aussi étaient en français. Nous ne comprenons pas un seul mot, et par conséquent nous permettons nos lecteurs trouver qu'ils desirèrent ces disques ou non.

MISCELLANEOUS



Wagner: Lohengrin—Bridal Chorus. Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of the Nordwestdeutschen Rundfunks (Hamburg) conducted by Wilhelm Schüchter. And **De Koven: O Promise Me.** Jan Peerce (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Warner Bass. One side, and **Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream**—Wedding March. BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-7" disc (ØV-ERA-236) \$1.49.

All right, Mr. Record Dealer, here's your record for June: both wedding marches, Jan Peerce singing *O Promise Me*, plus notes by Amy Vanderbilt, of the *Complete Book of Etiquette* fame, telling the purchaser just how to arrange a home wedding. Maybe you could throw in a 3-cent piece (something old), a bright penny (something new), a Duotone Electro-Wipe (something blue), sell the package deal on credit (something borrowed) and advertise a complete wedding for \$2.75 or thereabouts.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, GSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
Ø indicates 45 rpm.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

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JULY, 1955

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

IN JUNE 1948 we invited our readers' attention to a remarkable set of records called "Stethoscopic Heart Records," prepared and edited by George D. Geckeler, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine in charge of Cardiology at Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital, Philadelphia. These were 78 rpm discs; the set was later re-issued on LP (*C-ML-4240) and still later was issued with the comments in Spanish (*C-ML-4380).

Improvements, mostly the availability and adaptability of the tape recorder, have made possible a new and up-to-date disc by Dr. Geckeler, which should certainly prove invaluable to the medical student or young doctor. It was possible, for example, to record on tape a heartbeat with a murmur, slow down the tape and excise the bit of tape with the actual murmur on it, re-record it at its regular speed and present a recording of the murmur *sans* heartbeat. This will indicate to the student what he must listen for in an actual heartbeat; it is easier to find a hidden article if you have actually seen (heard) the article before it was hidden.

Another obvious advantage of the record is that it will enable the doctor to hear rare heartbeats which might occur in only one or two patients in a whole lifetime of practice; conceivably a patient's life might be saved, or at least prolonged, because the doctor would be able to recognize a defect which, without this disc, he might never have run into before. As with the previous discs, this one does not lend itself to classroom use; it is to be played on one's own phonograph at normal volume, and it may be listened to through a stethoscope, or not, as the student chooses.

The two previous LP's are still available, as is the present one (*C-ML-4976); the price of each disc is \$6.95, and if your local dealer can-

not supply you, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see TNR Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

NOTE: Columbia has discontinued its 10-inch ML-2000 and CL-6000 (pops) series; the **Current Market Price** for these items, while they last, is \$1.49.

* * *

About fourteen years ago the Laboratory of Ornithology of the Albert R. Brand Bird Song Foundation, Cornell University, issued an album of 78 rpm records entitled *American Bird Songs*, Vol. I. It has been a consistent seller over the years to bird lovers, and it contains the calls of some 60 birds of North America. It has now been released on a 12" LP record, in answer to the demands of many persons who hesitate to purchase 78 rpm records any longer; at its price of \$7.75, the LP version represents a saving over the older 78 rpm price.

The calls are presented exactly as you hear

them—not slowed down or speeded up, or in any way distorted. Each call is identified by Dr. Arthur A. Allen; amateur bird watchers will thus be able to identify any bird whose call is on this disc, if he ever hears it.

The surfaces of our copy were smooth and silent, and the fidelity of the recording was just as good as the 78 rpm version (we thought it better, actually, although we don't see how it could be); if your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to the publisher of THE NEW RECORDS will be filled promptly.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning July 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Love Duets from the Opera. Excerpts from *Sonnambula*, *Bohème*, *Gioconda*, *Manon Lescaut*, *Rigoletto*, *Adriana Lecouvreur*, *Andrea Chenier*. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50178) \$4.98. (TNR Aug. '51, Mar. '53, Apr. '53, Dec. '53, Jan. '54 & Oct. '54).

Brahms: *Symphony No. 1 in C minor*, Op. 68. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orch.—Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3117) \$1.98. (TNR Aug. '46).

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 6 in B minor*, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orch.—Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3118) \$1.98. (TNR Mar. '45).

Moussorgsky—arr. Ravel: *Pictures at an Exhibition*. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orch.—Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3119) \$1.98. (TNR Dec. '46).

Mahler: *Symphony No. 1 in D*. Minneapolis Symphony Orch.—Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3120) \$1.98. (TNR Oct. '41).

Bach: *Cantata No. 11* ("Lobet Gott in seinen Reichen"). One side, and Bach: *Cantata No. 67* ("Halt in Gedächtnis Jesum Christ"). And Bach: *Cantata No. 147* ("Herz und Mund")—Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring. Kathleen Ferrier (contralto), soloists, the Cantata Singers and the Jacques Orchestra—Jacques. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-845) \$3.98. (TNR June '50).

Gounod: *Roméo et Juliette* (highlights). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra du Théâtre national de l'Opéra Paris—Erede. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1111) \$3.98. (TNR Jan. '54).

Verdi: *Rigoletto* (highlights). Soloists, chorus and orchestra—Questa. 1-12" disc (*CE-A-50166) \$4.98. (TNR Oct. '54).

Donizetti: *L'Elisir d'Amore* (complete). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera House—Santini. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6024) \$7.98. (TNR Sept. '54).

Delibes: *Lakmé* (highlights). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra de l'Opéra-Comique (Paris) conducted by Georges Sébastian. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1129) \$3.98. (TNR Jan. '53).



ORCHESTRA

Respighi: *Vetrata di Chiesa* ("Church Windows"). One side, and Respighi: *Feste Romane* ("Roman Festivals"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50046) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

Honegger: *Symphony No. 2*. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. One side, and Menotti: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*. Tossy Spivakovsky (violin) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1868) \$3.98.

The opening fanfares of *Roman Festivals* could well be the mustering for all high fidelity fans, for Mercury offers a disc that will have hi-fi addicts twisting, twirling, and adjusting all knobs and controls within grasp. This disc presents two of Respighi's gaudiest scores in reproductions that are a criterion of the art as we know it today. When you hear the solo tam-tam crash at the end of the *St. Michael the Archangel* movement of *Church Windows* you may well swing around to see whether or not it happened in person in your room. But all is not noise on these two sides; there is a depth and perspective to the quieter passages which makes the full ones all the more magnificent. The *October Festival* movement of *Roman Festivals* demonstrates how clearly and nicely a quiet section can be recorded and still have perspective. This music comes from a distance, as it should—and does—in a concert hall; but it is all there without any volume control boosting on your part. Here is truly a spectacular reproduction which keeps Mercury in the forefront with any of the best of them. As for the music, it is Respighi, it is a gorgeous panorama of orchestral textures, it is evocative of the scenes it depicts, and it is rather thrilling in its way. *Church Windows* appears on LP for the first time, and we do not envy the next one who tries it. *Roman Festivals* has had stentorian treatment previously by Ormandy and Toscanini.

Fanciers of violin concertos have something mighty

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓞ indicates 45 rpm.

fine coming their way in a first recording of a new work, the *Menotti Violin Concerto*. Menotti's style is largely melodic, and his vocal writing is grateful. This carries over into his violin concerto so that we have something pleasant to hear, for a change, from a contemporary composer. This is not old formula worked over; it is fresh and original; but it is, thank heavens, music. Spivakovsky plays it well and the accompaniment is good. Münch is something of a champion of the *Honegger Symphony No. 2* (for strings and trumpet, which instrument makes a triumphant entry in the finale). Münch and RCA Victor reproduction take top honors over two previous recordings of this work. This is an interesting and exciting score which Münch delivers with conviction and the Boston strings perform with accuracy, tone, and style. An excellent disc in every respect.

S.

Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120.

One side, and **Wagner: Siegfried Idyll**. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-13) \$4.98.

Dvorák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95

("From the New World"). New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Rudolf Schwarz. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8308) \$4.98.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67.

One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60**. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5406) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

Cantelli has stiff competition from a long line of notable conductors who have previously recorded each of these works. In the Schumann *Fourth* there is Paray with a dynamic reading, Szell with an incisive one, Furtwängler with a caressing one, Krips, Monteux, and other experts on the subject. But then, none of them has the Philharmonia Orchestra, which on a dreary off-day is better than many an orchestra at the top of its form. This time, both orchestra and Cantelli were in good form, and the result is good enough to make a choice among Schumann *Fourth* LP's no matter for snap judgment. Surprisingly enough, Cantelli does not give this the high voltage treatment, he keeps it warm and romantic, but within a sane framework. It is a fine performance. Much the same could be said of the *Siegfried Idyll*, which lacks a bit of the warmth that a conductor of greater maturity exudes in a work of this nature. Cantelli is tender and considerate, and a decade or so from now may let his hair down a bit more. Here is a delicate reading played exquisitely by the Philharmonia. Both sides are well reproduced.

We suppose that the "New World" Symphony is a product of Capitol's recent acquisition by E.M.I., for the jacket bears this inscription: Capitol International Series—Distinguished European Artists Recorded Abroad in Full Dimensional Sound. We were

not prepared for anything quite of the excellence of this performance. It is surprisingly fine, as an interpretation, as an orchestral performance, and as a reproduction of depth, richness, and luscious, blooming quality. Where it places in the line-up with the eighteen other LP's would take a column of comment. Suffice it to say that this one is excellent and worth investigation by those who like their interpretations and recordings warm and rich.

From the rich and warm we pass on to the thin and acidulous, both in matters of interpretation and reproduction. You can take the Schwann catalog and blindfolded pick a better reading of the Beethoven *Fifth*, for this is a pitiable effort in every respect. Just hear what a virile job von Karajan does with it, for example, to say nothing of Steinberg or any of nearly a dozen others. The *Fifth* does not need a different interpretation ever, it only needs a good one. The *Fourth*? Frankly, we never got that far. S.

Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*CML-4973) \$4.98.

Bartók: Concerto No. 3 (1945). Monique Haas (piano) with the RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. One side, and **Martin: Petite Symphonie Concertante**. RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9774) \$3.98.

The Bartók *Concerto for Orchestra* is being treated to the best by the record companies, for it now has five recordings. Each of these five has, as an interpreter, a first rank conductor: Dorati, Ormandy, Reiner, van Beinum, and von Karajan. It is a fact that each of these is a good presentation of the work. Of the three latest recordings, von Karajan, Dorati, and Ormandy, the choice may well be a personal one on the part of the buyer as to conductor, orchestra, or label preference. Dorati has the flashiest performance; von Karajan is solid and forceful; Ormandy is smooth, brilliant, and aided by a virtuoso orchestra par excellence. The reproduction is along similar lines, with Dorati's the flashiest, von Karajan's the most solid, and Ormandy's something of a combination of the two, with the emphasis on good balance. We would be inclined toward either Dorati or Ormandy.

The Bartók *Third Concerto* has appealed to us most in the recent version by Pennario and Golschmann (*CL-P-8253), a performance which we think cannot be bettered. As a coupling it has a stunning performance of the Prokofiev *Third Concerto*. The present reading by Monique Haas of the Bartók is a fluent one, with good orchestral support, but it does not replace the vital performance by Pennario, which we still prefer.

Frank Martin's *Petite Symphonie Concertante* is a cleverly orchestrated work for solo harp, piano, and harpsichord with string orchestra (divided into two equal groups). As interesting as the work is, we cannot enthuse over its musical values; it is either inclined to be dry, or else it is over the reviewer's

head. It just does not seem to have the melodic inspiration to match the inventiveness of the form. Those who like it are referred to another good recording of the work by Ansermet (*L-LL-390), whose version is easily a match for Fricsay's. S.

American Music Festival Series (Vol. 13). Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40012) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *The Pleasure Dome of Kubla Khan*; *The White Peacock*, Op. 7, No. 1; *Clouds*, Op. 7 No. 4; *Bacchanale*, Op. 6, No. 3 (Griffes). *Memories of My Childhood—Life in a Russian Village*; *Poem for Orchestra* ("La Bonne Chanson") (Loeffler).

American Music Festival Series (Vol. 14). Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40013) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Poem and Dance* (Porter); *New England Chronicle* (Donovan); *Tres Himnos* (Hively).

Volume 13 of Mercury's American Music Festival Series is one that is sure to be warmly welcomed by many a record collector. It presents American music that is a joy to hear. Is it old hat? Is it a back-wash from the romantic period? Is it out of step with today's notions of music? Well, whatever it is, it sounds good to most of us; and that is something in its favor. Griffes and Loeffler were considered original thinkers three or four decades ago, and their music holds up mighty well beside the music that fills ninety-five percent of our concert programs; if this is not good music, then neither is most of the music that fills the programs of the major symphony orchestras in our country. We found this disc a sheer delight; and that includes not only the music, but the superb performances by a veteran in this field, Howard Hanson, and also Mercury's wonderful reproduction. All of these titles are first LP recordings except Griffes' *The White Peacock*, and all represent major orchestral efforts of the two composers.

Three more first recordings appear in Volume 14 of the series. New Englanders Porter and Donovan and Florida's Hively are represented with music composed at a later date than the above mentioned Griffes and Loeffler music. Porter's *Poem and Dance* date from 1932; Donovan's and Hively's works were both composed in 1946-47. With this music we get into a type of composition much more contemporary than Griffes and Loeffler. None of the music seemed to us as uninspired meandering; all of it had something to say and said it felicitously and with conviction. The selection of these three particular works on this one disc provides a good variety and contrast. Again, Hanson and his men turn in sterling perform-

ances and are splendidly recorded, with a remarkable perspective in the softer passages—the music comes from a distance but is perfectly clear and distinct. This is a fine pair of discs which we recommend highly. S.

Hindemith: Die Harmonie der Welt ("Harmony of the Universe"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Hindemith. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9765) \$3.98.

Hindemith: Educational Music for Instrumental Ensembles, Op. 44. The Maurice Levine String Sinfonietta. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3161) \$3.98.

Hovhaness: The Flowering Peach (Suite from the Incidental Music). One side, and **Hovhaness: Is There Survival** (Suite from the Ballet). And **Hovhaness: Orbit No. 1.** Chamber Ensemble conducted by Alan Hovhaness. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3164) \$3.98.

Hindemith's Symphony "The Harmony of the Universe" makes its first appearance in a well-performed and well-recorded version conducted by the composer. From his opera of the same title, based on the life of the astronomer Johann Kepler, Hindemith extracted materials for this symphony. The first performance took place at a public rehearsal in Basle in January 1952; its New York premiere came in October 1953, at which time Howard Taubman, in the *New York Times*, offered this description: "An impressive work both in aim and reach. . . ." This work is truly impressive, and makes more sense than some of Hindemith's works. It is, like most of Hindemith, more from the mind than the heart; or if that is a bit too severe a statement, it is certainly the work of a man whose learned and disciplined mind for music creates works whose originality does not stem from emotional content. The plan of the music came first, and any beauty deriving from it is incidental.

Hindemith's *Educational Music for Strings* is thoroughly boring from first bar to last—as far as thee and me are concerned; directors of school orchestras may find it otherwise. We guarantee it is not for the collector of records generally, whether he be interested in classical, modern, or even Hindemith in particular. The music is apparently played quite well and recorded likewise. It consists solely of short exercises, written in the first position for violins or string choirs; all of it is unbearably dry.

The Hovhaness music is concerned mainly with unusual timbres; much of the music has a quality similar to Balinese music. It is not loud or heavily scored—quite the contrary. The Intermezzo of "The Flowering Peach," for example, is scored for alto saxophone, clarinet, tam-tam, vibraphone, and harp (you can gather the Oriental effect of this grouping). Those weaned on Tchaikovsky are not likely to find this disc very invigorating; those interested in contemporary fare will probably enjoy many of the interesting effects created. We found too much sameness

to the music, as all three selections are similar in scoring. S.

Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B minor. One side, and **Borodin: Symphony No. 3 in A minor** ("Unfinished"). And **Borodin: Prince Igor—Overture.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1178) \$3.98.

Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B minor, Op. 5. One side, and **Ippolitov-Ivanov: Caucasian Sketches, Op. 10.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35145TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35145) \$4.98.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). One side, and **Borodin: Prince Igor—Polovtsian Dances.** And **Moussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain.** L'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by Igor Markevitch. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35144TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35144) \$4.98.

Among the world's great conductors there can usually be found one or two who are original thinkers. Some of these original thinkers take a score and give it an "original" interpretation which turns out to be a mannered and unsound reading. But the really great conductors can take a score and study it with a fresh approach and come through with a reading that clarifies the work as it has seldom if ever been heard before. Beecham is a notable example of a clarifier, Toscanini often does it, and Ansermet surely belongs in that class. The Borodin Second is a prime example. Most of us never realized what is really in that first movement, for it is played so fast it sounds like a whole bunch of little phrases strung together. If you have ever had any leaning toward this work, by all means hear what brother Ansermet does for it. Whatever praise we may have bestowed on previous versions is certainly a matter between the various previous versions, for this one by Ansermet is something entirely unlike any of them—and we will throw in the Kletzki reading with the "previous" versions and previous notions about what this score really has in it. Ansermet is so different he is in a class by himself, and he outclasses them all. We hand it to him for giving us an idea of what the Borodin Second Symphony really is; London has supplied rich-sounding reproduction.

Borodin's unfinished *Third Symphony* exists as two movements, which Borodin had merely sketched and which were finished and orchestrated by Glazounov. As in all Borodin symphonies, the second movement is the Scherzo. The work is interesting, pleasant to hear, and apparently not of the stature of the Second. The *Prince Igor Overture* gets about the best phonographic treatment it is likely to have; under the skilled hands of Ansermet, this work emerges with a profile that is a credit to all concerned.

Kletzki's reading of the *Caucasian Sketches* is no match for the recent Mitropoulos (*CML-4815),

nor for the previous Désormière. The Philharmonia, as usual, plays beautifully, but Kletzki just doesn't have too much to say.

Three repertoire staples appear in time for programs of lighter, familiar summer music listening. Markevitch uses the full choral version of the *Polovtsian Dances* and gives a powerful reading which ranks with the best of them. This is indeed a top-notch performance, and the fact that it is sung in French does not matter in the least. Markevitch gives idiomatic readings of the *Romeo and Juliet* and *Bald Mountain*, which together make this a most attractive disc, featuring reproduction that is high, wide, and handsome—and powerful! S.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3 in A minor ("Scotch"). One and one-half sides, and **Mendelssohn: Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage, Op. 27.** Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35183TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35183) \$4.98.

Bizet: Symphony No. 1 in C. One and one-half sides, and **Bizet: Patrie Overture, Op. 19.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1186) \$3.98.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("The Great"). Halle Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1085) \$2.98.

As one of its initial releases, the Israel Philharmonic's performance of the lovely Mendelssohn "Scotch" Symphony suffers only one thing, and that is the characteristically correct but uninspired conducting of Paul Kletzki. Kletzki seems like a nice fellow, has been around in the best circles, rarely ever mangles a score, and does a conscientious job; but he invariably turns in a reading that lacks that final something which makes it a truly memorable and inspired performance. Somehow, this record just did not come off—and after two hearings at two different times. Well, that is how we feel about it; you may find it quite all right. The orchestra plays mighty well, and the reproduction is quite satisfactory. Our recommendation for the work will remain with the Steinberg-Pittsburgh combination (*CL-S-8192).

Our old friend Ansermet comes through with another fine reading in the light and tuneful Bizet *Symphony No. 1*; but it is ruined by a type of reproduction we cannot recall having previously encountered from London. There is a consistent overcutting, resulting in scrapes and rattles throughout the record. We cannot recommend this disc, except to state that if it sounds all right on your phonograph it is a good buy; otherwise, try another version.

We have stated recently that we think Furtwängler (*D-DL-9746) has the last say in Schubert No. 9 matters, and there is a sizable group of record collectors who are in hearty agreement. For those who do not agree, here is a disc which may find favor. At its price it is surely a good, high fidelity version, an

eminently sane reading, and a solid performance. For those who like a big tone aided by plenty of hall resonance, this is worth investigation. We still recommend Furtwängler. S.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35202TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35202) \$4.98.

Berlioz' youthful masterpiece, the *Symphonie Fantastique*, receives still another recorded performance; this time it is the Philharmonia Orchestra under the direction of Herbert von Karajan. Now von Karajan is rated very highly in some quarters and, perhaps, deservedly so, although the writer always felt his performances were marked by willfully doctrinaire tempi and dynamics. It could be that many people like just this aspect of his art; if so, this *Symphonie Fantastique* will please them. To be honest, it left the writer cold.

To treat Berlioz as a vehicle to demonstrate personal idiosyncrasies is no way to gain this column's accolades. All the exaggerated *pianissimi*, the sudden changes in time, only serve to sabotage the performance. All this catches up with Herr von Karajan in the third movement (unnecessarily divided between two sides here), and the result is plain dull. The waltz lacks spirit and drive, the opening movement lacks cohesion, while the finale sounds noisy, as does the *March to the Scaffold*.

The recorded sound is pretty good and the Philharmonia Orchestra is one of Europe's best, but von Karajan's heavy and insensitive hand never gives it a chance in this recording. There are very fine jacket notes by Jacques Barzun that lay the ghost of "program" very effectively. The jacket is further enhanced by a beautiful reproduction of Signol's painting of the youthful Berlioz. It is a pity the interpretation of the score does not equal the fine packaging.

The last word in recorded versions of this exciting music is Dorati's on Mercury. The writer, just to make sure his memory did not deceive him, played it right after the present Angel set, and the differences were astounding. The reader is urged to make the experiment himself. W.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D. Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35180TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35180) \$4.98.

Mahler: Symphony No. 9 in D. Three sides, and **Schönberg: Verklärte Nacht, Op. 4.** Israel Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35181/2TP) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3526B) \$9.98.

The Mahler *First Symphony* is engaging the attention of record companies lately to the point where we now have seven versions from which to choose. Kubelik and the Vienna Philharmonic (*L-LL-1107)

have been roundly applauded for their excellent version, and Mitropoulos and Walter both have staunch supporters. Kletzki and the Israel Philharmonic make a surprisingly fine showing in this work, and their version is clearly in the running with the best of them. The Israel Orchestra is a first class ensemble. Kletzki has not usually sent us into rhapsodic prose over his interpretations, but he has a good feeling for Mahler. We are inclined to this opinion even more strongly by the Mahler *Ninth* listed above. In the *Ninth* we have not only a splendid revelation of the score, but infinitely more accurate playing by the orchestra than was found in the Horenstein version, in which the Vienna Symphony played rather poorly. For performance, interpretation and reproduction, this new version by Kletzki is clearly the best of the *Ninth*. The fourth side offers a magnificently played *Verklärte Nacht*, which has the intensity of the Stokowski and Ormandy readings, if not quite all the lushness.

To get back to the *First Symphony*, of the seven interpretations, those in the top bracket are Kubelik, Kletzki, and Walter. Steinberg missed the mark a little by being somewhat dull; Mitropoulos is superb, but the reproduction is not as full as today's vintage. To recommend a version of this work is rather pointless, for those who understand and enjoy it will show a preference for the type of reading Walter achieves, or for the type Kubelik achieves, or they will prefer the solidity of Kletzki. Those not familiar with the work, but interested in finding out about it, can be safely recommended to any of the three for a worthy performance. Of their initial releases, the Israel Philharmonic can be justly proud of the Mahler discs. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Octet for Strings in E-flat, Op. 20.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1869) \$3.98.

If you feel that the Schubert *Fifth* is minor Schubert, that it needs a good shot in the arm and generally robust treatment to make real music out of it, then the present disc by Toscanini is for you. If, however, you appreciate the serene beauty of this melodious masterpiece and love its graceful charm and warm sweetness, then this rendering of it will prove thoroughly revolting. It certainly rubbed us the wrong way. Here is Toscanini at his diabolical worst, with unnecessarily fast tempi, choppy chording and phrasing, angular treatment of graceful lines; and the reproduction is totally without resonance, which gives the normally dry-toned NBC Orchestra an even drier tone. In all fairness (to Schubert, if no one else) anyone who is interested in this wonderful symphony should hear the recent edition by Karl Böhm and the Vienna Philharmonic (*L-LL-1105) before buying any version of the work. The blooming beauty of this great orchestra and the gentle touch of Böhm make their version of the Schubert *Fifth* something that most music lovers will not be able to resist.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
() Indicates 45 rpm.

Another conductor who has the style for this work is Beecham, but his LP is a 78 transfer and leaves plenty to be desired in matters of fidelity—however, the performance itself is superb (*CML-4771).

The Böhm disc referred to above has as a coupling the Schubert "Unfinished," and if your collection is in need of a more modern reproduction of that masterpiece, you will get it in a performance as fine as the *Fifth*. The Toscanini *Fifth* has the Mendelssohn *Octet* for a coupling. This is considered a great chamber music work, although most folks agree that it is orchestral in concept, and Toscanini has long been famous for his performances of the work. It is certainly a showpiece for the string section, although it would be pleasanter listening if it were recorded with more resonance. Either this string section, or the manner in which it is recorded, cannot seem to yield a string tone of beauty. The disc states it was taken from the broadcast of March 30, 1947. Whatever the circumstances, the record as it stands is no gem. This disc is strictly for dyed-in-the-wool Toscanini fans.

S.

Pop Concert Favorites (Vol. 3). MGM Orchestra conducted by Macklin Marrow. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3138) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Emperor Waltz*, *Fledermaus*—Waltzes (Strauss); *Heartstrings Waltz*, *Romantic Waltz* (Lanner); *Alt Wien* (Godowsky); *Liebeslied* (Kreisler); *Gold and Silver Waltz* (Lehar); *Skaters Waltz* (Waldteufel); *Waltz of the Puppets* (Hilliam); *Serenade for Strings*—Waltz (Tchaikovsky); *Silver Moon* (Romberg); *Rosenkavalier*—Waltzes (R. Strauss).

Pop Concert Favorites (Vol. 5). Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Hans-Jürgen Walther. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3144) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Pinocchio Overture* (Toch); *Funeral March of a Marionette* (Gounod); *Suite Primaevale*—Deer Dance, War Dance (Skilton); *Queen of Sheba*—Cortège (Gounod); *Phaeton* (Saint-Saëns); *Pacific 231* (Honegger).

Strauss: On the Beautiful Blue Danube. One side, and **Strauss: Tales from the Vienna Woods.** Members of the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-7" disc (øV-ERA-257) \$1.49.

Popular Spanish Classics for Orchestra. Orchestras conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9775) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *El Amor Brujo* (with Diana Eustrati, mezzo-soprano) (Fallá); *Three-Cornered Hat*—Dances (Fallá); *España Rapsodie* (Chabrier).

Vienna Bonbons and Other Works. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Anton Paulik. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-459) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Egyptian March*; *Where the Citrons*
(Heading continued next column)

Bloom; *Tik-Tak Polka*; *Roses from the South*; *Bandit's Galop*; *L'Enfantillage Polka*; *Vienna Bonbons* (J. Strauss, Jr.). *Music of the Spheres* (Josef Strauss).

Famous Auber Overtures. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Albert Wolff. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1157) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Overtures to Masaniello*, *The Bronze Horse*, *Fra Diavolo*, *The Crown Diamonds*.

(7) **Great Rossini Overtures.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-456) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Overtures to Tancredi*, *The Journey to Rheims*, *The Turk in Italy*, *The Siege of Corinth*, *La Cenerentola*, *The Italian in Algiers*, *Semiramide*.

Restful Good Music. Leopold Stokowski and His Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1875) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Tu mancavi a tormentarmi*, *Cruelissima* (Cesti); *Gagliarda* (Fescobaldi); *Le Triomphe de l'amour*—Nocturno (Lully); *Dido and Aeneas*—When I am laid in earth (Purcell); *Mein Jesu* (Bach); *Sonata in C minor*—*Siciliano* (Bach); *Suite No. 2 in B minor*—*Sarabande* (Bach); *Symphony No. 6 in F*, Op. 68—Scene by the Brookside (Beethoven); *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1*—*Adagietto* (Bizet).

We have been in the habit of calling such discs as these "music for summertime listening"; actually these tid-bits and familiar overtures are pleasant any time, but the manufacturers seem to feel that the best season for them is summer, and hence they are issued in the late spring. The Hamburg Philharmonia disc exhibits an occasional slurred note; otherwise, these discs are quite satisfactory.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93.** Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8292) \$4.98.

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8293) \$4.98.

Tchaikovsky: Serenade in C, Op. 48. One side, and **Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25** ("Classical"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8290) \$4.98.

Steinberg shows us that he can put his hand to anything and come up with a sterling job; this man is a very fine conductor, and Capitol is fortunate to have him on its roster. His versions of the works listed above will, no doubt, sway many prospective purchasers his way; we have no hesitancy in placing his recording of Rachmaninoff's *Symphony No. 2* at the top of the LP list. And you will not find better recorded sound accorded any conductor than Capi-

tol's "Full Dimensional Sound," as exemplified by these discs.

Strauss: (10) Waltzes. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4993) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Blue Danube*, Op. 314; *Southern Roses*, Op. 388; *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, Op. 325; *Der Zigeunerbaron*—Waltz; *Die Fledermaus*—Waltzes. *Artist's Life*, Op. 316; *Voices of Spring*, Op. 410; *Emperor Waltz*, Op. 437; *Vienna Life*, Op. 354; *1001 Nights*, Op. 346.

Wine, Women and Song. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Anton Paulik. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-457) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Ritter Pazmann*—Czardas; *Artist's Life*; *Frisch ins Feld*; *Wine, Women and Song*; *Morning Papers* (Johann Strauss, Jr.). *Jockey Polka*; *Aquarellen* (Josef Strauss).

The new number, to us, among these seventeen, was Josef Strauss' *Jockey Polka*, a cute little number taking about two minutes. Seems as though Strauss in high fidelity always sells; if you're interested, you'll find these quite well done.

CONCERTO



Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18.

One side, and Mendelssohn: *Capriccio Brillant*, Moura Lympany (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Nicolai Malko. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-15) \$4.98.

Ravel: Concerto in G. One side, and **Ravel: Concerto in D for Left Hand Alone.** Jean Doyen (piano) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Fournet. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3123) \$3.98.

Moura Lympany and Nicolai Malko offer a reading of the Rachmaninoff *Second Concerto* that tends toward the poetic rather than the clangy and earthshaking. It reminds us of the Geza Anda recording recently reviewed (*ANG-35093). It has not the vitality of the Kapell, nor the profile of the Rubinstein; but it has better reproduction than either of them. Capitol just released a version by Pennario (*CL-P-8302) which we enjoyed, although not everyone thought it was the greatest. The bests of the lot have all been mentioned in this paragraph, and the prospective buyer might sample several of them. Naming a choice would rule out either the best performance or the best reproduction, for the two are not currently available on the same disc. As a compromise we would stick with one of the newer versions such as Anda, Pennario, or the present disc by Lympany. The only other disc which offers a coupling is the Anda (two Rachmaninoff Preludes). Miss Lympany's coupling of the Mendelssohn *Capriccio Brillant* is a felicitous one; it is seldom recorded but is a sparkling short work that serves as a nice encore.

Ravel's last two works for orchestra are the two

concertos here recorded. Jean Doyen plays them with precision and a lot of dash and flair. The performances are really very fine, as are also the accompaniments. The principal competition is the Blancard and Ansermet readings of the same works (*L-LL-797). And that is some formidable competition as far as Ansermet is concerned. One does not have to listen too long to realize that Ansermet's contribution is quite the deciding factor. If Epic's reproduction is a shade bolder, and Doyen's playing a shade more incisive, Ansermet's accompaniments are so many shades greater that the London disc is definitely our recommendation. The orchestral score in these Ravel works is no minor part of their effectiveness; it is practically as important as the solo instrument. S.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D. One side, and **Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole.** Nathan Milstein (violin) with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8303) \$4.98.

Khachaturian: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.

Thomas Magyar (violin) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3080) \$3.98.

When Milstein moved to the Capitol label he opened up a new career for himself and opened new vistas for Capitol and for the record collecting public generally. As top ranking violinist in the Capitol roster, he has been recording all the choicest plums in the repertoire. The results have been a pleasant surprise to many persons, and Milstein has acquired a new horde of admirers. His series for Capitol brings us this month a pair of works which augur well for first place among all LP versions. The Prokofiev concerto appealed to us because it is not only a brilliant performance, but also because it is a brilliant reproduction, best of the several recorded versions of the work. Milstein plays the difficult passages of this concerto robustly and accurately, and the close-to microphoning practically puts your ear at the soloist's elbow. It is a thrilling performance that violin fanciers will not want to miss. The Lalo business is an oft-recorded score, but it is always a charmer, and Lalo never had it better than in this broad-toned, warmly played Milstein edition—again with incredibly revealing reproduction (you can hear Milstein draw deep breaths). It is a pleasure to report that Capitol has, very clearly, another winner in their latest Milstein disc.

Built on Armenian folk song melodies, and containing all the elements which have made Khachaturian's music popular in this country (notably Gayne), the *Violin Concerto* is a pleasing vehicle for both performer and listener. It is a flashy technical exercise in the higher art of violin playing, yet it is immediately appealing for its insistent melodies and propelling rhythms. We were generous in our praise of the recently issued version by Igor Oistrakh, son of the great Soviet fiddler, David Oistrakh. Igor's

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ♪ Indicates 45 rpm.

version (*ANG-35100) is still tops in our opinion, which is not to say that the present disc is not a mighty good one. We find Angel's reproduction less wirey in sound, and we thought Igor a bit more deft in some of the tougher passages. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Haydn: Quartet No. 36 in F minor, Op. 20, No. 5. One side, and **Schubert: Quartet No. 10 in E-flat, Op. 125, No. 1.** Vienna Philharmonic Quartet. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66034) \$4.98.

Haydn: Quartet in G, Op. 76, No. 1. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in D, Op. 76, No. 2.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5342) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

Haydn: Quartet in C, Op. 64, No. 1. One side, and **Haydn: Quartet in B-flat, Op. 64, No. 3.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5314) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

Haydn: Trio No. 1 in G, Op. 73, No. 2. One-half side, and **Brahms: Trio No. 2 in C, Op. 87.** Trio di Trieste. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1176) \$3.98.

Six chamber works of Haydn, one of Schubert and one of Brahms appear this month. The first disc offers a fine coupling, but Telefunken still hasn't achieved (on LP) its near-perfect reproduction of old, as a quick comparison with either of the Westminster discs will demonstrate. The Westminsters are recorded at higher volume, and the instruments really sing! The Trio di Trieste performs the two C major Trios with sympathy, but to us they are not as interesting as some trios we've heard.

Dvorák: Quartet No. 6 in F, Op. 96 ("American"). One side, and **Dohnanyi: Quartet No. 3 in A minor, Op. 33.** Hollywood String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8307) \$4.98.

Dvorák: Quintet in A, Op. 81. Barylli String Quartet with Edith Farnadi (piano). One side, and **Dvorák: Quartet in A-flat, Op. 105.** Barylli String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5337) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

Dvorák's "American" Quartet and the *Piano Quintet* are well represented in the LP catalogs with fine performances; collectors interested in these works probably already have included them in their libraries. There are now these fine versions of each to add to the choice.

Dohnanyi's *Third Quartet* is romantic, sonorously chromatic, replete with polyrhythms, yet modern. Dohnanyi began what might be termed the "post-Brahms" school; his music was evolutionary, rather than revolutionary. You would not take the work for Brahms; nor would you for Bartók, Schönberg or

Shostakovich. It is right in between; and as expertly rendered by the very fine Hollywood String Quartet, it should be investigated by the chamber music fan who wants to branch out a bit, yet not get too far off base. This is a first LP recording; it will be tough to improve on.

Dvorák's last chamber work, the *Quartet in A-flat*, is here offered in its second LP; it is quite unlike the "American" Quartet, containing more native themes (though the first movement was written at the end of Dvorák's stay in the States). You will have to tone down the highs on this Westminster disc; otherwise performance and reproduction are quite satisfactory.

CHORAL



Kodály: Psalmus Hungaricus, Op. 13. Ernst Häfliger (tenor) with the Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral, RIAS Choirs, and the RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. One side, and **Kodály: Marosszék Dances.** RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9773) \$3.98.

Kodály's *Psalmus Hungaricus* has been well received since 1927 when Willem Mengelberg presented the first American performance at Carnegie Hall. It was Kodály's first major success in this country, although after its initial Budapest performance it was given in five countries and eleven cities within one year. The text of the work is the Hungarian version of the 55th Psalm by the Hungarian poet-teacher Michael Veg, written when the Turkish rulers forbade the clergy to speak to the people except in Biblical text. Veg extended the original Psalm by interpolating his own verses between those of the Psalm, the latter referring to the tribulations and oppressions of the people with hope for a return to a free nation. *Psalmus Hungaricus* is scored for large orchestra, organ, chorus, and tenor solo, the latter singing the original Psalm while the chorus carries Veg's verses. Two-thirds of the vocal part is relegated to the tenor, and this performance is fortunate to have so excellent a tenor to interpret the part. The chorus is flexible and attains good sonority. Fricsay molds a performance that is sensitive and creates the proper atmosphere. This is an excellent reading, which will be the preferred version for most persons (the only other worthy LP is by Solti, *L-LL-1020). The reproduction by Deutsche Grammophon is unusually good in balance between soloist, chorus, and orchestra, and has a nice perspective.

The other side of the present disc brings a first recording of a work originally composed as a piano solo. It was transcribed by Kodály for full orchestra at the request of Toscanini, who performed it in New York in 1930. It is based on traditional folk tunes collected by Kodály from the Marosszék district. The work has a gravity not usually encountered in most dance suites. This is really a connected and extended

work with the principal emphasis on Kodály's original work rather than one the six basic dance melodies use. It is given a careful and well played reading by Fricsay and the RIAS orchestra, and is splendidly recorded. S.

OPERA



Gounod: Mireille (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists, Chorus of the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence directed by Elisabeth Brasseur, and l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35210/2TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3533C/L) \$15.98.

Mireille.....Janette Vivalda (s)
 Vincent.....Nicolai Gedda (t)
 Ourrias.....Michel Dens (bt)
 Vincenette.....Madeleine Ignal (s)
 Tavan.....Christiane Gayraud (ms)
 Ramon.....André Vessières (bs)

After *Faust*, Gounod wrote eight operas, of which only *Roméo et Juliette* and *Mireille* ever achieved any degree of popularity, even in France. The present recording will serve to introduce the latter opera to American music lovers. *Mireille* had its Metropolitan premiere in 1919, some 55 years after its world premiere in Paris. In the Metropolitan cast were such standbys as Maria Barrientos (*Mireille*), Charles Hackett (Vincent), Clarence Whitehill (Ourrias), and Léon Rothier (Ramon) while Pierre Monteux conducted. It was dropped from the repertoire after four performances.

The recording here is, to all intents and purposes, a very plush one. The production is that of the Aix-en-Provence Festival of July 1954, and considerable care was obviously spent on the affair. Janette Vivalda, in the title role, sings with authority and assurance in a very pleasant and typically French voice. Her characterization is about the best in the cast, and she manages to be convincing in a role that carries very little conviction. Nicolai Gedda is a colorless Vincent, lacking the determination to make anything of his role. His voice is too light for operatic singing, and he is woefully weak in Vincent's fifth act aria *Anges du paradis*. Michel Dens (Ourrias), Madeleine Ignal (Vincenette) and Christiane Gayraud (Tavan) do well with their smaller roles, as do the others in the fairly large cast.

André Cluytens' direction leaves a lot to be desired; it is over-deliberate and sorely lacking in decisiveness and force—in fact it can hardly be called direction at all. The arrangement of the score, made by Henri Busser (a pupil of Gounod's), may have something to do with the lack of animation.

Angel has supplied the most sumptuous notes and libretto yet—it amounts to a personally conducted tour of the Provence country, complete with drawings, photographs and detailed descriptions. W.

Ravel: L'Enfant et les Sortilèges (complete). (Sung in French). Suzanne Danco (soprano), Flore Wend (mezzo-soprano), Hugues Cuénod (tenor) with supporting soloists; the Motet Choir of Geneva directed by Jacques Horneffer; and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc in album (*L-LL-1180) \$4.98.

Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, subtitled a *Fantaisie Lyrique en deux parties* had its premiere in Monte Carlo on 21 March 1925. It is scored for a large orchestra that boasts some 15 percussion instruments, in addition to the usual forces. All this orchestral opulence, however, is used carefully, and the result is what has been described as "chamber orchestra refinement which omits every unnecessary note or color."

The excellent libretto relates the story of a young child who is wilfully bad and destructive—then the various objects on which he vented his anger and naughtiness come alive and scold or ignore him as the case might be. The child then repents of his wickedness and helps a wounded squirrel; the animals all call for the child's "Maman" and there is a happy ending.

The singers, headed by Flore Wend, Suzanne Danco and Hugues Cuénod all handle their assignments, many of them multiple ones, in sterling fashion and, in many cases, with considerable humor. Outstanding are Suzanne Danco's Princess and Squirrel, Cuénod's Little Old Man and Wedgewood Teapot. Lucian Lovano as the Arm-chair and the Tree and Marie Lise de Montmollin, who sings the roles of Mother, China Cup and Dragonfly also deserve special mention for thoughtful and considered performances. Flore Wend sings the part of the child to perfection.

Ravel's score is a delight from start to finish—in fact, this setting of Collette's fanciful tale ranks with the finest things Ravel has done. M. Ansermet, of course, just revels in a work of this sort and spreads himself much to the advantage of the music. The loving care he lavishes on it makes the performance memorable. A libretto and notes are supplied.

An earlier recording, dating from 1948, is definitely outclassed. W.

Wolf-Ferrari: Il Segretto di Susanna (complete). (Sung in Italian). Elena Rizzieri (soprano) and Giuseppe Valdengo (baritone) with the Orchestra of Radiotelevisione Italiana (Turin) conducted by Angelo Questa. 1-12" disc in album (*CE-A-1250) \$4.98.

Wolf-Ferrari: Il Segretto di Susanna (complete). (Sung in Italian). Ester Orel (soprano), Mario Bariello (baritone), with the Turin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alfredo Simonetti. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9770) \$3.98.

It is uncanny how recordings are issued in pairs these days. (One recalls some previous remarks along such lines in these columns and a comparison with

the animals entering Noah's ark.) Now we are treated to two recordings of Wolf-Ferrari's sparkling little opus *Il Segretto di Susanna* ("The Secret of Susanna")—a work virtually unknown to phonophiles except for the delightful overture.

Wolf-Ferrari wrote this little one act opera ("intermezzo" he called it) in 1908–09, and the piece had its premiere at Munich on 4 December 1909. The Metropolitan produced it with Geraldine Farrar and Antonio Scotti in 1912, and later Lucrezia Bori and Scotti were the principals. The opera has not been heard at the New York house since 1921 to the best of the writer's information, probably because Susanna's secret (she smoked cigarettes) isn't much of a secret anymore.

The two performances here are pretty good, although the acting is much more convincing in the Decca release. Much of the comedy lies in the words, although there are some delicious underscorings in the orchestra as well as some lovely tunes. The comedy at the beginning lies in husband's very audible sniffs when he smells the tell-tale tobacco smoke. Now Mario Bariello has a fine disdainful sniff that records well—Valdengo doesn't even attempt to sniff. Actually, if one did not know the story, one would not guess it is a comedy from the Cetra recording. Valdengo and Rizzieri sing well, but they are too serious. Bariello and Orel, on the other hand, have a rousing time of it, and this listener had several good laughs at their antics.

As usual, the direction has a good deal to do with the over-all success of the performance, and Questa's approach is to take the work seriously, as though he were directing a performance of *I Pagliacci*. Alfredo Simonetti, however, has a light touch, a sense of humor; and everyone has fun.

Decca supplies only the English text, Cetra both. Sound is good in each so, aside from characterization, there is not much to choose from; but, for this writer, characterization is everything in a work such as this.

W.

VOCAL

Debussy: Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien. (Sung in French). Suzanne Danco (soprano); Nancy Wough, Lise de Gontmollin (contraltos); Union Chorale de la Tour-de-Peils directed by Robert Mermoud; and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*LL-1061) \$4.98.

In 1913 Romain Rolland wrote that French musical art was "supreme in the aristocratic qualities but that, with very few exceptions it lacks vigor, red blood." He might almost have had Debussy's *Le Martyre de Saint Sébastien* in mind, for the foregoing phrase is a disconcertingly accurate description of the incidental music Debussy wrote for d'Annunzio's mystical play.

The work dates from 1911 and is of a hybrid char-

acter (even for incidental music) that, in the end, cannot be separated from the play for which it was written. Debussy, himself, said that he "had no great effort to make in order to rise to the heights of mysticism reached by the poet's drama." This is probably true but, as the English critic Martin Cooper accurately points out, "the combination of extreme, if veiled, carnality and theatrical religiosity is no longer as tempting as it was in 1911, and not even the beauties of Debussy's choral writing can reconcile us to the character of the work." D'Annunzio's drama is divided into five "mansions" after the manner of medieval mysteries, and one can judge the style from the titles: *The Court of Lilies*, *The Magic Chamber*, *The Council of False Gods*, *The Stricken Laurel* and *Paradise*.

Ernest Ansermet makes a strong case for the score, both in his lucid program notes and in the manner in which he directs the performance. Subtly, but surely, he leads his singers and orchestra through the perfumed score, and the results are persuasive in the extreme. The soloists, headed by Suzanne Danco, sing with understanding and sure vocalism. The choral parts are ably sung and, of course, the Suisse Romande Orchestra, plays to perfection.

An earlier recording (TNR May '51) received high praise, but in view of Ansermet's greater familiarity with the score and style plus the many technical improvements since 1951, the present set must be considered far superior to the earlier Allegro issue.

W.

Roland Hayes Sings the Life of Christ. Roland Hayes (tenor) accompanied by Reginald Boardman (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-462) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Prepare Me One Body; Three Wise Men to Jerusalem Came; Lit'l Boy; Live a-Humble; He Raised Poor Lazarus; You Hear the Lambs a-Cryin'; Plenty Good Room; One of You Shall Betray Me; Who Betrayed My Lord?; They Led My Lord Away; He Never Said a Mumberlin' Word; Did You Hear When Jesus Rose?; Were You There?*

Spirituals. Lucretia West (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Jonathan Brice (piano) or Westminster Light Orchestra and Male Quartet conducted by Sam Morgenstern. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5338) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

CONTENTS: *Weepin' Mary; Ol' Time Religion; I Want Jesus to Walk with Me; Ride On, King Jesus; De Blin' Man Stood on de Road; Ev'ry Time I Feel de Spirit; Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen; We Are Clim'in' Jacob's Ladder; De Gospel Train; Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray; Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child; All God's Chillun Got Wings; Peter, Go Ring Dem Bells; Wade in de Water; Let Us Break Bread Together; Roll, Jordan, Roll; Li'l David, Play on Yo' Harp; Sinner, Please Don' Let Dis Harves' Pass.*

These two discs of Negro Spirituals offer an inter-

esting contrast both as to approach and performance. Roland Hayes is, of course, an outstanding interpreter, not only of the Afro-American song but of the classic art song as well, as owners of the Vanguard album reviewed here a few months ago (TNR Dec. '54) know very well. The idea, Mr. Hayes' own, of arranging the present group of songs to depict the life of Christ is a happy one. Needless to say they are all sung in expressive and reverent fashion—the record may be unreservedly recommended from every angle: musical, religious and artistic.

Miss West's recorded performance, on the other hand, leaves something to be desired, both vocally and interpretively. One does not for a moment question the singer's sincerity—on the contrary her approach is distinguished by this very characteristic; but somewhere along the line she has been misled for the end results are disappointing; there are occasional lapses from perfect intonation and there is a lack of variety in her presentation. In some cases the results, particularly where the orchestra and male quartet are used, are not in the best of taste—for example, the very loud trumpet passages in the spiritual *Ride On, King Jesus*.

There may be many who will prefer Miss West's delivery to that of Mr. Hayes because of its traditional qualities, i.e., the use of the assisting quartet and somewhat "jazzy" effects in other instances. Each to his taste—this writer much preferred Roland Hayes' dignified handling of the songs.

Recorded sound in both instances is very good, and first class jacket notes are supplied. W.

Strauss: A Night in Venice (complete). (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano), Nicolai Gedda (tenor) and supporting soloists; Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Otto Ackermann. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35197/8) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3530B/L) \$10.98.

While Strauss' operetta *A Night in Venice* never achieved wide popularity in this country, those who admire the Viennese master's work can now enjoy an authentic performance of the work via this new and superior version on Angel Records.

The cast, similar in make-up to previous Angel recordings of light opera, is a first class one. It is led by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf in the principal soprano role, and she acquits herself, as always, in exemplary fashion. She sings the music in an ardent and sparkling manner that is credible from start to finish. Emmy Loose (whose name is omitted from the cast of characters) brings considerable charm to the sizeable role of Ciboletta. Nicolai Gedda and Erich Kunz are both musically and temperamentally equipped to sing this sort of music and, in addition to turning in fine performances, seem to enjoy themselves hugely. The others in the cast are well chosen and lend excellent support. Otto Ackermann's direction is a model of Straussian vivacity, and the entire produc-

tion moves along in splendid style.

There are many, including Strauss himself, who have complained about the "silliness" of the book; but, in the last analysis, how often does one encounter literary gems in opera libretti? This one is singable, mildly humorous and just the sort of thing to listen to on some of the warm summer nights we will soon be having.

Angel's sound is of the best, the package includes a libretto and notes on the genesis of the work. W.

Italian Songs. Gianni Poggi (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9163) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Na Sera 'e Maggio; Tu Ca Nun Chiagne; Ricuodete 'e Me; Passione; Doje Lacreme; Nun Me Sceta.*

Italian Songs. Fernando Corena (bass) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9164) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Napule Ca Ne Se Val; Autunno; I' Te Vurria Vasa'; Pulecenella; Me So' Mbriacato e' Sole; Dicitencello Vuje.*

Songs from Napoli. Roberto Murolo (vocal and guitar). 1-10" disc (*DURIUM DLU-96001) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Marechiare; L'Ultimi Rose; Guapparia; Mandulinata a Napule; Torna Pulicenella; Desiderio 'e Sole; 'A Bumbuniera Mia; Fravula Fra'.*

Italian Popular Favorites. Aurelio Fierro (tenor) with orchestra. 1-10" disc (*DURIUM DLU-96003) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *'E Cummaralle; Firenze Sogna; Bella si tu Vuo' Sape'; Pasquale Militare; Sciummo; Maria Rosa; Torna Dimane; 'A Luciana.*

4th San Remo Song Festival. Soloists with instrumental accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*DURIUM DLU-96004) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Canzone da due Soldi; Con Te; Berta Filava; Arriva il Direttore; Non e Mai Troppo Tardi; Tutte le Mamme; Mogliettina; Piripicchio e Piripicchia.*

For light summer listening this series of recordings devoted to popular Italian songs will probably fill the bill for many persons—and not only those of Italian extraction.

Curiously, the two more pretentious (artistically speaking) are the least interesting. Both Poggi and Corena seem to have selected songs that are, in the main, lugubrious in sentiment and melody. Only one of the twelve songs on the two discs was at all familiar, that being *Dicitencello Vuje*. Both singers are in excellent voice, and the recording leaves nothing to be desired from a technical angle.

The last three discs listed above are more frankly popular—do not pretend to be other than ephemera (with the possible exception of a few of the Neapolitan songs) and may be enjoyed as such. The artists seem more genuinely at home with their material and

consequently are able to enjoy themselves.

All of the singers have quite acceptable voices, both musically and stylistically. W.

Hindemith: Geistliche Motetten. Irmgard Seefried (soprano) accompanied by Erik Werba (piano). One side, and Mozart: *Il Re Pastore*, K. 208—Overture; *L'amero saro costante*. And Mozart: *Rondo for Soprano*, K. 490 ("Non Temer, Amato Bene"). Irmgard Seefried (soprano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner, with Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9768) \$3.98.

Operatic Arias. Hilde Gueden (soprano) with the Orchestra of l'Accademia di Santa Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9165) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *La Traviata*—Ah! Fors' e lui; *Sempre libera*; *Gianni Schicchi*—O mio babbino caro; *Turandot*—Signore, ascolta; Tu che di gel sei cinta; *Falstaff*—Sul fil d'un soffio etesio.

Records by Irmgard Seefried and Hilde Gueden are among the few bright spots in the almost overwhelming avalanche of LP discs issued these days.

Miss Seefried essays a first recording of Hindemith's *Geistliche Motetten*; and, while the writer found the music of no great interest, he did find much to admire in Irmgard Seefried's lovely lyric soprano and sure vocalization. Hindemith has set three Biblical texts: two concerning the Nativity (Matthew 2:1-12 and Luke 2:15-20), and the third from John 2:2-11 is about the wedding at Cana. Musically they are dry, typical *gebrauchsmusik* ("practical" or "bread-and-butter" music). Such made to order scores are mere note stringing, and thus it was a rather dirty trick on Hindemith to devote the other side to Mozart. Furthermore, it is sort of weird merchandising, for it is highly unlikely that the Mozart fancier will care for the Hindemith and while the chances that the Hindemith admirer will like Mozart, there are fewer of the latter than the former. However that is Decca's problem. Miss Seefried is superb in the Mozart; the accompaniments are good, as are the violin obbligati played by Wolfgang Schneiderhan, who is also Miss Seefried's husband. Good sound, excellent notes and some of the quietest surfaces Decca has given us to date.

Hilde Gueden sings the two Verdi and the three Puccini arias in very acceptable fashion. The *Traviata* excerpt is notable for its spirit and clear ringing high notes. The *Turandot* excerpts are very well, very expressively done, as is the *Gianni Schicchi* arietta, although one would prefer a little more Italianate approach in this latter case. The main disappointment with the disc is the unenthusiastic support rendered by the once excellent Alberto Erede. To be sure, some of this is London's fault—the orchestra sounds as if it were in another room. Nevertheless it is an attractive disc at its modest price. W.

Ravel: *Shéhérazade*. One side, and Ravel: (3) *Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé*. And Ravel: (2) *Mélo-dies hebraïques*. (Sung in French). Suzanne Danco (soprano) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LD-1196) \$3.98.

Debussy Songs. Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by André Collard (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9176) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Le Promenoir des deux amants*; *Fêtes Galantes*; (3) *Chansons de Bilitis*.

Ravel's song-cycle *Shéhérazade* was written in 1903, when he was 28 years old; and, although in the same year he tried and failed for the third time to win the coveted *Prix de Rome*, it is now generally recognized that Ravel was a mature composer, even though the watchdogs of the Conservatoire would not admit it.

The three songs that comprise the cycle, *Asie*, *La Flûte enchantée* and *L'Indifférent* are the work of Tristan Klingsor (!) who was born plain Léon Leclère, a close friend of Ravel's. There is nothing too remarkable about the poetry, but Ravel's settings are little miracles of musical atmosphere. Needless to say, the team of Mlle. Danco and M. Ansermet extract all the music and color from the score and pass it along to the listener, enriched by their own several musical and interpretive abilities. The same holds true for the *Trois Poèmes* and the *Deux Mélo-dies* although here there is less chance for either soloist or conductor to "spread himself," as it were; the music is more restrained.

Miss Kolassi's pleasing mezzo is heard to good advantage in these three groups of songs by Debussy. Virtually all of them have been recorded before and, while Miss Kolassi is an excellent artist, there is little she can or does add to what has already been said.

Sound is good in both discs, and there are informative notes. No texts are supplied, however. W.

PIANO



The Complete Piano Works of Bach (Vol. I). Gunnar Johansen (piano). 2-12" discs in folder (*ARTIST DIRECT No. 1) \$12.

CONTENTS: *Goldberg Variations*; *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*.

Gunnar Johansen is Artist in Residence at the University of Wisconsin where, since 1939, he has been able freely to follow his musical ideals. Born in Copenhagen, he has studied with Victor Schiöler and Egon Petri and has concertized throughout Europe and America, receiving high critical acclaim. He specializes in playing a piano with two keyboards, which permits the playing in octaves—a chord struck in the usual position will also sound an octave above. At times, this gives the effect of two performers. The piano here recorded yields a full, rich tone through-

out its entire range, and the reproduction is exceptionally fine. The discs should sound excellent, even on the best of high fidelity equipment. Hi-fi bugs will even notice some extraneous noise, such as talking, during parts of the *Passacaglia and Fugue*.

Two other pianists and three harpsichordists have LP's of the *Goldberg Variations*. Harpsichordists have several different voices to work with for variety in registration; pianists have only the piano, except Johansen, who can double the voices in octaves and generate more power as well as a bit of variety from his piano. Those who do not like harpsichords will find this a possible solution to the problems posed by these monumental works. How the purists will take it is another matter. They will have to admit that Johansen is a valid interpreter. His playing is equal to the demands of the music, and his notion of the idiom commands respect. He has not the flights of fancy that one hears in Landowska, yet he brings more imagination to the music than many an artist who plays these works. It is solid but not pedantic; warm and inventive but not eccentric. Being an ardent organ fan, this reviewer felt the *Passacaglia and Fugue* more a novelty than a realization of its possibilities, notwithstanding the fact that it may have been composed for pedal cembalo or harpsichord.

This is the first of a series which will comprise the complete piano works of Bach, in twenty albums. It is recommended to those seeking a fine reading of the *Goldberg Variations* on a piano rather than on a harpsichord.

S.

Chopin Sonatas. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1866) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35; Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58.

Chopin Mazurkas and Nocturnes. Alexander Uninsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3122) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Mazurkas in B-flat minor, Op. 24, No. 4; in F minor, Op. 63, No. 2; in D, Op. 33, No. 2; in A minor, Op. 17, No. 4; in E minor, Op. 41, No. 2; in C-sharp minor, Op. 63, No. 3. Nocturnes in B-flat minor, Op. 9, No. 1; in D-flat, Op. 27, No. 2; in C minor, Op. 48, No. 1. Barcarolle in F-sharp minor, Op. 60. Fantasia in F minor, Op. 49.

In June we commented at some length upon the fine playing of Brailowsky in the Saint-Saëns *Fourth Concerto* (*V-LM-1871) and remarked that it was a much-needed recording. However, we need new recordings of the *Second* and *Third* Chopin Sonatas like we need the proverbial hole in the head; so, although Mr. Brailowsky's interpretations are excellent, we must observe that there are several others equally fine (Katchen, *L-LL-1163, TNR June '55, to name one with the same coupling), and we hope that Victor will turn Mr. Brailowsky's obvious talents to works needing recording.

Alexander Uninsky apparently has a fancy for Chopin's works (see TNR Feb. '55), and he does them rather well; but, as above, there are others. . .

Liszt: 19 Hungarian Rhapsodies (complete). Alexander Borovsky (piano). 3-12" discs (*VX-PL-8900 to *VX-PL-8920) \$5.95 each.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

Liszt: Rhapsodie Espagnole. And **Liszt: (6) Consolations.** One side, and **Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 16-19.** Edith Farnadi (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5339) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

Liszt Recital No. 2. Peter Katin (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1087) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Liebesträume* No. 3; *Rigoletto, Paraphrase de Concert*; *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp minor*; *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6 in D-flat*; *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15 in A minor* ("Rakoczy March").

The popularity of Liszt's piano music does not wane, and it is hardly surprising that records of it continue to be issued. Because of limited space we will note only that we now have two complete recordings of the *Hungarian Rhapsodies*: Farnadi (*WEST-WL-5230/5231/5339) and the present Borovsky. Both are excellent, but the Vox reproduction has a tendency to be edgy and must be tone-controlled to eliminate this.

ORGAN



Bach and Liszt Organ Recital. Karl Richter, playing the organ at Victoria Hall, Geneva. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1174) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*; *Chorale Prelude: Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ*; *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor* (Bach). *Prelude and Fugue on BACH* (Liszt).

Bach Organ Recital. Karl Richter, playing the organ at Victoria Hall, Geneva. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1175) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor*; *Chorale Prelude: Wachet auf*; *Chorale Prelude: Kommst du nun, Jesu, vom Himmel herunter*; *Chorale Prelude: Vom Himmel hoch*; *Prelude and Fugue in E minor*.

This pair of organ discs is primarily characterized by one basic thing: the tempos chosen are prevailingly slower than those which we are accustomed to hear. This disc should prove of inestimable value to those who are studying organ, for most of the things that are glossed over, or lost in a mass of tone in rapid passages, stand out here in clear relief. Prof. Richter is a neat, clean, player who endeavors to put every note correctly in place. Non-organ students will also find these discs mighty interesting, for they will change some notions about Bach. Most of us have heard this stuff played so fast that it all goes by before we have a chance to find out what it is made of. The handsomest express train on earth doesn't

look much different from a string of cattle cars when it is traveling by at ninety miles an hour; but when it slows down, we can see its beauty. Sometimes that is true of music. You will find out how true when you hear some of the music on these discs.

London has captured the magnificence of the Victoria Hall organ with uncommon skill, even in these days of good organ reproduction. This is a superb instrument, which Prof. Richter registers wonderfully well. And it does not squeak and squeal like so many organs that are baroque and try to be baroque. It always sounds like an organ, and not like a calliope. The more you hear Karl Richter and the Victoria organ, the more respect you gather; by the time you have finished, the respect has turned into affection, admiration, and gratitude. Several of these selections you will think you have heard for the first time. In all, a remarkable pair of discs, well worth hearing.

S.

VIOLIN



Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole. One side, and **Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D.** Nathan Milstein (violin) with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8303) \$4.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CONCERTO.



DICTION

Beerbohm: The Crime. One side, and **Beerbohm: London Revisited.** Read by Sir Max Beerbohm. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35206TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35206) \$4.98.

George Bernard Shaw dubbed him "the incomparable Max," and this unique figure in English letters and art, Sir Max Beerbohm, became famous as an author, critic, satirist, parodist and caricaturist—perhaps not as a result of G.B.S.'s epithet, but certainly not in spite of it. It has been said that "polite irony" is a quality of Sir Max's writings, and this characteristic is surely evident in the two essays read here: *The Crime*, from "And Even Now" (1921); and *London Revisited*, an essay written especially to be read over the BBC on 29 December 1935, evidently one of a series of separately written essays to be read by several men about their places of birth.

No one will claim that Sir Max's diction is great. He is 83 years old, and he stumbles once in a while and mounds some words. But his timing is superb, his phrasing adds emphasis where it should be added; in short, the essays gain something by his reading them that might not be caught by one's reading the printed page. An experienced actor might have accomplished the same effects; but the obvious point of the disc is that it is a memento of "the incomparable Max" reading two of his typical (if trifling) essays;

and as such a memento surely the disc will be accepted by his many friends.

CHILDREN



"Now We Know." (Ages 5-9). Tom Glazer and Paul Tripp with orchestra and chorus. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-670) \$3.95.

Here is a very clever disc which answers, so a child from five to nine years of age can understand, the following questions: How Does a Cow Make Milk? Do Animals Talk to One Another? Why Are Stars of Different Colors? Why Does a Bee Buzz? Why Do Stars Twinkle? What Makes the Weather? Why Can't I See in the Dark? Who's Afraid of Thunder? What's Inside Our Earth? What Is the Atmosphere? Where Does the Sun Go at Night? Why Is the Sky Blue? Why Do Leaves Change Their Color? and several others. These answers are partly in prose but mostly in charming little songs.

It is a well-known axiom in the trade that kiddie discs are sold to adults, and therefore, if you would sell the records, you must intrigue the parents. If the youngsters happen to like the disc, that's OK; but that, in itself, won't sell the record. There's no doubt that this record will find a welcome reception among parents of children of the "Why, Daddy?" age; but, if it puts your minds at ease, we can report that most of the subjects were interesting to our seven-year-old, and he did understand them. And his five-year-old brother liked the songs just fine.

MISCELLANEOUS



History of Music in Sound (Vol. IV: The Age of Humanism). Edited by J. A. Westrup. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6029) \$10.50.

History of Music in Sound (Vol. V: Opera and Church Music). Edited by J. A. Westrup. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6030) \$10.50.

Occasionally a set of records is issued that calls for superlatives all along the line. Such discs, of course, must have high artistic value and uncommon musical interest; and when this is coupled with exceptional educational worth, the collection moves into a special category reserved for recorded masterpieces.

Such is the niche that must be reserved for RCA Victor's *History of Music in Sound*, Volumes IV and V of which are reviewed here. Volume II "Early Medieval Music up to 1300" and Volume III "Ars Nova and the Renaissance (c. 1350-1540)," previously noticed (TNR July & Aug. '54), were of rather antiquarian interest; but with the release of Volume IV, "The Age of Humanism (1540-1630)," one is confronted with music that does not sound in the least strange; rather it has a singularly remote and impressive beauty. Included are madrigals by Weelkes, Wilbye, Luzzaschi and Lucca Marenzio (the "Sweetest Swan of Italy"); vocal works (i.e., excerpts from masses, songs, opera) by Victoria, Palestrina, Lassus, Tallis, Gibbons, Praetorius, Giovanni Ga-

bieli and Monteverdi, as well as representative instrumental music by Frescobaldi, Farnaby, Sweelinck and Andrea Gabrieli. The various artists who perform this old music are among the best in their respective fields and include such notable singers and instrumentalists as Alfred Deller, René Soames, Frederick Fuller, Thurston Dart, the London Chamber Singers, St. Paul's Cathedral Choir and others.

Volume V, "Opera and Church Music (1630-1750)," is even more exciting. Here there are six excerpts from Italian Opera (including one from Cesti's fabulous *Il Pomo d'Oro*, an opera first produced in Vienna in December 1666 at a cost of 100,000 thalers—about \$72,000, pre-war American—a lot of money, even for the Hapsburgs!). In addition there are representative examples from French opera (Lully and Rameau), an excerpt from Keiser's almost legendary *Octavia* (German opera) and a scene from John Blow's *Venus and Adonis*. Italian oratorio music by Carissimi and Marcello, and French and English choral music (Rameau for the former, Humphrey and Greene for the latter) are also represented. The German cantata is illustrated by an excerpt from one of Heinrich Schütz' *Sacrae Symphonae*—his setting of the Pauline conversion, *Saul, Saul was verfolgst du mich?*—surely one of the most dramatic and impressive scores ever written.

Obviously, space will not permit further discussion. The artists include Victoria de los Angeles, Margaret Ritchie, Gladys Ripley, Arda Mandikian, Scott Joynt, William Herbert and others of equally high calibre.

A book containing musical examples, texts and translations as well as information concerning each selection is included. The intelligent and curious phonophile is urged to investigate both sets; for the serious music lover they are a must. W.

The Japanese Koto. Shinichi Yuize (koto). 1-12" disc (*SOT-1132) \$5.95.

There has been considerable interest among returning soldiers and sailors in music of the Orient—particularly that of Japan—because they heard much of it while over there. However, this disc by Shinichi Yuize playing the koto may be thoroughly enjoyed by anyone; it is Oriental, but most ingratiating and will be pleasing to Occidental ears. The koto is the classic Japanese instrument; it looks something like a lute, has a separate bridge for each string, is fingered with the left hand on the left side of the bridges, and plucked with the fingers (with picks attached) of the right hand on the right side of the bridges.

Mr. Yuize plays some music of his own composition plus some Imperial Court Music; it all sounds very authentic, and you might be happily surprised if you investigate this charming record.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓢ Indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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"The World's Record Shop"

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HIGH FIDELITY marches ever onward to new (you should excuse the expression) highs, and manufacturers still issue high fidelity demonstration records to assist the audiophile in assaying the potentialities of his record player. One of the best to come along is a recent Vox record, *This Is High Fidelity* (*VX-DL-130, \$6.95). Contained in a sealed box are a 12" LP disc and a 24-page booklet which tells you everything you need to know about high fidelity, explained in terms that most anyone can understand. The record offers examples of many distortions which can occur (harmonic distortion, intermodulation distortion, transient distortion, etc.). It contains a piece played with a range of 300-3,000 cycles per second, then the range is extended to 5,000, then to 8,000 cps while the bass response is lowered to 200, then to 100 and to still lower frequencies. Then, *mirabile dictu*, the same number is presented with just the frequencies above 3,000 cps, then with just those above 5,000 cps, and so on, so you can hear just how much you are missing when your instrument has a limited range. You will find that you do not miss much if your phonograph has a range of 100-5,000 cps—just the edge of the spectrum which gives "presence" to the reproduction.

With this disc, following the instructions in the booklet, you can test the frequency response of your own phonograph. The record is strictly for the hi-fi fan—its musical values are practically nil; yet to Vox must be given full credit for a worthy and successful effort. 1-12" disc (*VX-DL-130) \$6.95.

A musical demonstration of your phonograph may be offered with a new release by High Fidelity Recordings, Inc., featuring George Wright playing a Wurlitzer pipe

organ. The manufacturer claims the range of the record to be 16-16,000 cps; and, although the per cent distortion is not given, it is very low. The numbers include *Jalousie*, *Ebb Tide*, *Caminito*, *Boogie*, *Angela Mia*, *Roller Coaster*, *The Boy Next Door*, *Brazil*, *Stella* by *Starlight*, *Love for Sale*, *Dancing Tambourine*, and *Stars and Stripes Forever*. The Wurlitzer organ has five manuals and 256 stops, "plus other miscellaneous switches and devices." It will reproduce well on nearly any phonograph, although the better the instrument, the better it will sound. 1-12" disc (*HI-FI R-701) \$4.98.

RCA Victor offers a disc this month which is an exposition of the RCA Electronic Music Synthesizer. Other than the spoken voice of the commentator, John Prescott, every sound on the record is produced by the synthesizer. Theoretically the synthesizer will reproduce any kind of sound imaginable, limited only by the ability of the synthesist. In the present disc this ability, we felt, was too limited; not that we wonder at this, however, for when you attempt to produce a sound of a given growth, duration, decay, pitch, intensity, tremulo, and so on, in order to imitate a piano, organ, violin, or even the human voice, you are attempting quite a bit. How would it be possible for a man (or more than one man) to master such a complex instrument when Menuhin, Rubinstein, Primrose, *et al*, spend years in an effort to master instruments which, by comparison, are relatively simple?

This RCA disc was perfectly fascinating to us because it does demonstrate (subject to the aforementioned limitations) the possibilities of the synthesizer; you will hear attempted imitations of a harpsichord, piano, hillbilly band, dance band, organ, the human voice (very poor, and Mr. Prescott admits this), banjos,

trumpets, and many other instruments. These imitations would not fool any but the most unschooled hearers; what intrigued us was the numbers arranged according to the "engineer's conception" of the music, for here was no imitation—but very novel interpretations with sounds very likely never heard before. We do not see the point of a million dollar (or more?) imitation of a \$5,000 piano; but a machine to generate new sounds offers almost limitless possibilities. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1922) \$3.98.

If your local dealer cannot supply any or all of the above discs, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see TNR Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

NOTE: The **Current Market Price** of all 12-inch Mercury LP's, including the Olympian Series, is \$3.98.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of

the last three years beginning August 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Mozart: Symphony No. 27 in G, K. 199. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 30 in D, K. 202.** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Ludwig Jochum. 1-12" disc in box (*OL-50039) \$4.98.

Mozart: Concerto No. 14 in E-flat, K. 449. Grete Scherzer (piano) with the London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. One side, and **Mozart: Serenata Notturna in D, K. 239.** And **Mozart: (6) Notturmi for Voices and Woodwind.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9776) \$3.98.

Mozart: Concerto No. 26 in D, K. 537 ("Coronation"). One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Concerto-Rondo No. 1 in D, K. 382.** Carl Seemann (piano) with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9631) \$3.98.

Mozart: Sonata in F, K. 376. And **Mozart: Sonata in A, K. 402.** One side, and **Mozart: Sonata in E-flat, K. 481.** Walter Barylli (violin) and Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5394) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$2.99.

A sudden spate of Mozart recordings adds interest to the otherwise somewhat dull summer lists and, in addition, all of them are excellent performances—a few are actually inspired.

The performances of the two early Mozart symphonies by Jochum and the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra are good—that is they are stylish, finished performances. The music, however, is only ordinary—Mozart never wrote badly, but these little *sinfonias* are miles removed from the really great and big Mozart. Good sound.

A veritable gem of a disc, however, is the London Baroque Ensemble's Decca issue that features the *E Flat Concerto*, K. 449, the *Serenata* and the *Notturmi*. Karl Haas is favorably known via records he made for Westminster and London several years ago and, more recently, for Decca. His performances are all marked by a fine feeling for the music and excellent taste. Miss Scherzer turns out to be a first-rate Mozart stylist too, and the disc, with its unusual vocal trios (the *Notturmi*) is a joy from start to finish. Very good sound here.

The *Coronation Concerto* receives rather routine treatment at the hands of Messrs. Seemann and Lehmann. To be sure, the concerto is not among Mozart's most inspired efforts (which might account for its very considerable popularity?) but this listener felt

that more could have been made of it. The *Rondo*, a delicious piece of music, is also handled routinely—those who doubt the accuracy of this last remark are advised to hear Edwin Fischer's performance, now on a deleted 78, if at all possible, and check for themselves. Fair sound on this one.

The Westminster disc of Mozart sonatas is very good from beginning to end, K. 481 in particular being important music. Both Badura-Skoda and Barylli are sterling young artists, schooled in the Mozart tradition; and one can quarrel neither with their performances nor with the recording, which is very good indeed. W.

Rosenberg: Symphony No. 3 (1939) ("The Four Ages of Man"). Stockholm Symphony Orchestra conducted by Tor Mann. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-944) \$3.98.

Schuman: Symphony No. 6. One side, and **Piston: Symphony No. 4.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4992) \$4.98.

Alpaerts: James Ensor Suite. L'Orchestre national de Belgique conducted by Louis Weemaels. One side, and **Legley: Suite for Orchestra.** L'Orchestre national de Belgique conducted by Fernand Quinet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-874) \$3.98.

All five of the works listed above are appearing for the first time. They are by composers of the first rank, although several nationalities are represented, and some names may be unfamiliar to some of us. Hilding Rosenberg, born in Sweden in 1892, produced his first symphony in 1917, showing the influence of Sibelius. The nineteen-twenties found Rosenberg studying abroad, in Dresden and Paris, where he absorbed some other styles, notably Stravinsky and Schoenberg and Hindemith. Rosenberg's *Third Symphony* (1939) marked a turning point in his career, and he came back to a more Scandinavian type of thinking. We found the work pleasant to listen to, obviously the work of a good craftsman and rather inspired; but the total effect did not move us deeply. It could be said to be conventional, without enough profile of its own. If this is too hard an appraisal of the work, others may find, with repeated hearings, enjoyment in the work. It is splendidly performed and reproduced.

Ormandy and the Philadelphians offer a couple of top-drawer American composers in works several years old, but worth a recording. A first performance is too often a "done for glory" job which is promptly shelved for another first performance of something else. The conductor who does a service is the fellow who will take a work and play it for its worth, whether it is a premiere or not. Dorati and the Dallas orchestra premiered the Schuman in 1949; Dorati and the Minneapolis premiered the Piston in 1951. Both of these were commissioned works. In the jargon of those who do not prefer contemporary

music, Schuman's symphony is "modern." We can live nicely without it, but it may be of interest to a lot of other folks. Piston's symphony is a very palatable piece with melodic appeal, cast in a contemporary mold. Ormandy and the boys play these works with zest and polish; reproduction is big and bold.

Victor Legley's suite is a showpiece for the composer's ability in orchestration and the possibilities of a full symphony orchestra. It is good fun but not great music. Flor Alpaerts suite is a musical realization of four paintings by James Ensor. It is pictorial music that is cleverly contrived, with much novel orchestration. The Belgian orchestra plays the music of these Flemish composers with earnestness and devotion and the reproduction is good. The disc serves to show that contemporary Flemish composers have a lot in common with some of our American composers. S.

Britten: Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Frank Bridge. One side, and **Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35142TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35142) \$4.98.

Britten: A Simple Symphony, Op. 4. Strings of the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9184) \$2.98.

This pair of records brings us some English music at its very best. The familiar Vaughan Williams is given a magnificent reading by von Karajan, and the Philharmonia Orchestra plays with elegance. The *Fantasia* is written for two string orchestras, the second and smaller of which should, the composer indicates, be placed apart from the first orchestra if possible. The antiphonal use of these two orchestras is achieved most effectively in the recording. Music of intensity, such as the *Fantasia*, is a von Karajan specialty, and he does a wonderful job with this one. It is the equal of any other recording we ever heard of the work, and better than most of them. Von Karajan is also splendid in the Britten work, a set of variations which was a tribute from a grateful pupil to the teacher who had been his main instructor for so many years. The writing here is not only facile, but really clever and able to hold the listener's interest. There are nine variations, plus a fugue and finale, after the opening introduction and theme. The names of the movements indicate their style: Adagio, March, Romance, Aria Italiana, Bourrée Classique, Wiener Walzer, Moto Perpetuo, Funeral March, and Chant. Most persons should find both works on this disc enjoyable music, particularly in these highly recommended performances, with excellent reproduction an added feature.

Britten's *A Simple Symphony* is composed of themes and ideas from many youthful works, which he rescored for strings, and, as he says, "changing bits here and there, and making them more fit for

general consumption." He succeeded admirably, for we thought this just about as charming music as we had heard in many a day. The four movements are subtitled: Boisterous Bourée, Playful Pizzicato, Sentimental Saraband, and Frolicsome Finale. While the music is generally lighthearted, it is not in the least trite, and the third movement is a rather extended piece of true substance. Eugene Goossens conducts a performance of exceptional style and persuasion. The performance and the wonderful reproduction of string tone make this a disc that far too many folks are going to skip over—those who investigate will be well rewarded. This one just struck us right; we believe a lot of other persons will be fascinated by it, too. S.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 1, 2, 5. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-W-LAB-7003) \$7.50.

A previous Westminster Laboratory Series disc was reviewed in the November 1954 issue of THE NEW RECORDS, and the reviewer's remarks apply to the present disc just as well as they did to the disc then under consideration. Certainly we have reached an astonishing degree of perfection in disc reproduction with this type of disc, mainly because of the care in processing and the fact that an average of about fifteen minutes of music only is placed on each side. In this instance it was necessary to break the Rhapsody No. 1, placing part on side 1 and part on side 2. This seems like calling attention to the fussiness of the whole project. What price perfection for the hi-fi fan? With fifteen minutes average per side, the usual symphony of the romantic period would occupy more than one disc, and be chopped up in pieces reminiscent of 78 days. Which indicates that this type of record is primarily for testing hi-fi equipment, showing off same to one's friends, and not necessarily here to stay for the legion of record collectors. However, for what it is, this record is admittedly a magnificent reproduction with a blessing not found on many LP's these days, the blessing of no groove echo. When the opening chord is a strong one, there is no previous hint of it until the music itself gets there. By the same token, every other groove is similarly unaffected by its neighboring groove, and the result is a splendid clarity. Also, by limiting the minutes per side, we never get so far into a record that the sound becomes fuzzy (as we approach the label). This is ideal reproduction, even if it is not practical for all LP recordings. Can you imagine a Bruckner symphony, or a complete opera, recorded to these specifications? (Eight discs and thirty-odd dollars—back to 78 days again.)

The accompanying notes, elaborate and in several cases contradictory, explain that these "original orchestrations by the composer" were executed physically by F. Doppler under the exact instruction of Liszt himself, such as a busy executive might dictate a letter to his secretary. Yes sir, that is what it says.

Well, the performances are fine, and the music sounds better than you are likely to hear it again on vinylite. S.

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 1, Op. 138. One side, and **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 2, Op. 72a.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9185) \$2.98.

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72a. One side, and **Beethoven: Fidelio—Overture.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9186) \$2.98.

The story of Beethoven's having written four overtures to *Fidelio*, the first three known as *Leonore Overtures* and the last being the prelude nearly always used with the opera, is well known to most collectors. The *Leonore* No. 3 is the most frequently played of the three *Leonores*, so if you do not wish to own all four overtures, the second disc in the heading will most likely appeal to you.

The important thing about this brace of discs, however, is that these are the last recordings the late Clemens Krauss made; they serve, therefore, as a memento to the great conductor, whose many fans in this country will surely wish to add them to their collections.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 4 in E-flat ("Romantic"). Three sides, and **Sibelius: Symphony No. 7 in C, Op. 105.** Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 2-12" discs in album (*T-LGX-66026/7) \$9.96.

The fifth LP version of the Bruckner *Fourth* carries on a strange tradition in that all of the Bruckner symphony recordings have been made by a European orchestra. Paul van Kempen is an experienced hand with Bruckner symphonies, including the premiere of the *Sixth* in 1935, as played from the original version brought out by the International Bruckner Society. Van Kempen also uses the original scoring for the present performance of the *Fourth*. Original scorings are important in the case of Bruckner, for many of his well meaning friends rescored his works, made cuts, and did other things which destroyed Bruckner's intentions. Their effort to pour his works in a Wagnerian mold did him no good, and we are correcting that stupid idea these days.

Bruckner was an able musician, and many of his ideas were superb. His scherzos are in a class by themselves; the Scherzo of the *Fourth* is one of his greatest. We always find something refreshing in the unhurried manner of Bruckner, the elegance of his style, the simplicity with which he paints a grave and profound picture. There is a magnificent strength in many pages, an edifice of sound that is quite unique. Paul van Kempen gives a telling account of the *Fourth*. The Netherlands orchestra is pretty good when it gets warmed up, and they convey van Kempen's spirit admirably. Telefunken's reproduction is good, particularly in matters of clarity. We would

give this set a preferred rating over the other versions, mentioning only the Klemperer reading for its pace and drive.

The Sibelius *Seventh* does not lack for good recordings, with at least three good readings already available. Van Kempen is eloquent and does a fine job with the work, which makes it a highly acceptable coupling for the Bruckner. Since it will not be bought separately, comparisons are unnecessary; suffice it to say that this one is well-played and well-recorded.

Schubert: Symphony No. 4 in C minor ("Tragic").

One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor ("Unfinished").** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9370) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$3.98.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 ("Scotch"). ABC Sydney Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1089) \$2.98.

After listening to the umpteenth recording of the Schubert "Unfinished" Symphony we were musing as to just how to approach this job of declaring whether it is good, bad, indifferent, worth recommending to our readers or what to say about it. The thought occurred that a nice discussion could be had about whether music that is performed not really well is a bad job, or whether music that is not really performed poorly is a good job, or just what determines a truly worthwhile reading of a piece of music. That is an interesting angle; if it's not good, is it bad? If it's not bad is it all right? Well, we always have a fine basis for comparison in such oft-recorded items as the "Unfinished"—a masterpiece if ever there were one, regardless of how often it gets mangled. Now Hollreiser is not really a bad conductor, he just is not as good as some others who have committed this work to discs. Would you buy Hollreiser instead of Beecham, Böhm, Dorati, Furtwängler, Leinsdorf, Steinberg, Walter, Toscanini, or even Prohaska? If you would, here it is: the reproduction is pretty good, and the orchestral playing is pretty good, too. In our opinion this just does not stack up with the giants we have mentioned above. The No. 4 "Tragic" has not been blessed with nearly so many fine recordings, and Hollreiser compares well with most of them, although the earlier version on Vox by Klemperer is more than a match interpretively, and it was coupled with a nifty "Italian" Symphony by Mendelssohn.

RCA Victor is putting out some fine "New Orthophonic" High Fidelity Recordings on the Bluebird label, and it has been winning high critical acclaim. It evidently has another winner with this version of the sweetly melodious "Scotch" Symphony by Mendelssohn. From way down under comes a fine recording by the Australian Broadcasting Company's

Sydney Orchestra, which is a fine sounding group, and they are reproduced with resonance and clarity. Eugene Goossens has been on the recording scene for decades, and is a seasoned conductor who puts this work over with fine style. As a good buy, we could recommend only the Mitropoulos (*C-ML-4864), which is coupled with the Mendelssohn No. 5 "Reformation," as being worth considering if you are interested in that work.

Brahms: Serenade in A, Op. 16. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Carlo Zecchi. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3116) \$3.98.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Ladis. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9380) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$3.98.

Although this is not the first LP to be issued of the Brahms *Serenade No. 2*, it is the only one currently in the LP lists. The *Serenade* is scored for two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns, with violas, cellos, and basses—no violins. The emphasis is clearly on the wind instruments, and the total effect is rather chamber music-like. This is court music, a divertimento type of concoction, and no amount of salesmanship on the part of program annotators or note writers is going to sell this to the large body of music lovers who like orchestral music that is commonly called symphonic. This is for the devoted Brahmsian or the chamber music enthusiast. The work is in five movements, none of which generate much steam, but all of which are superbly molded essays that are written with the finest of skill for the chosen group of instruments. The performance by the renowned Amsterdam Orchestra is beautifully polished and shows this great ensemble in a more intimate and personal way, for the woodwind and horn players are not lost in a welter of other sound, they are indeed the stars. The reproduction is excellent. Strongly recommended to chamber music fans.

Vox made the *Scheherazade* listed above, handed it out for review, and this reviewer was the recipient. So here goes. In all our years of writing record reviews, never, never have we heard the equal of this disc. From the smallest companies, from the most insignificant ensembles, from the most unheralded sources, have we ever heard the equal of this disc. This is positively the most inept performance of anything to come our way. There must be five hundred orchestras in the United States, and five hundred would-be conductors, who do this well. There are not eight consecutive bars played in this work that we could not validly criticize for poor chording, poor intonation, sloppy playing, stupid directing, and heavens knows what else. If you collect "Bloopers" records, this belongs in the comic section of your library. As these lines are being written we notice that even the concertmaster is

unable to cope with the solo violin passages. Got to stop; the tears of laughter make it impossible to continue. S.

Music for a Summer Night. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1910) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Liebestraum* (Liszt—orch. Herbert); *Candlelight Waltz* (Mason); *Liebesleid, Liebesfreud* (Kreisler); *Faust—Waltzes* (Gounod); *España Waltz* (Waldteufel); *Sonata No. 14* ("Moonlight")—1st Movement (Beethoven—arr. Piston); *Caprice Viennois* (Kreisler); *Très Jolie Waltz* (Waldteufel); *Kammenoi-Ostrow* (Rubenstein).

Forever the Waltz. Vienna Bohemian Orchestra conducted by Fried Walter. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1876) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Blue Danube, Voices of Spring, Vienna Blood, Der Zigeunerbaron—Treasure Waltz; Tales from the Vienna Woods; Artist's Life, Die Fledermaus—Du und du* (all by J. Strauss, Jr.).

We don't know exactly how looking at beautiful, lightly-clad women will cool one off these warm evenings, but apparently these covers sell records. Discard the jackets of these discs for best results: the music is sure to please.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps. One side, and **Stravinsky: Petrouchka—Suite.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5030) \$4.98.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Overture-Fantasia). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Overture Solennelle "1812," Op. 49.** And **Tchaikovsky: Marche Slav, Op. 31.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4997) \$4.98.

Complete with new label and new packaging (including factory-sealing) Columbia comes forward this month with two new discs featuring "The World's Greatest Orchestra" in two works of Stravinsky and three of Tchaikovsky. The results are spectacularly fine, both performance- and reproduction-wise. A pair of hi-fi demonstration discs with good, popular selections which should find a ready market.

Prokofiev: Peter and the Wolf, Op. 67. One side, and **Britten: Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34.** Brandon de Wilde (narrator) with the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9280) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$3.98.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25 ("Classical"). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Serenade in C, Op. 48.** RIAS Symphony Orchestra (Berlin) conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9737) \$3.98.

Brandon de Wilde is a child actor who has achieved

notable successes on stage, movies and TV, and no doubt there are few children who could read *Peter and the Wolf* and Britten's work as well as he; nevertheless we feel that they require a narrator with a deeper voice (it sounds funny to hear a child explaining a story to a child, so to speak). Otherwise the Vox disc is quite well done, and if none of the other versions quite please you, you might try this one.

Ferenc Fricsay is building up quite a name for himself in this country, via his many Decca recordings, and offers this month two horse chestnuts which are well-represented in the LP catalogs already, but which he performs as well as any of the other conductors.

Messenger: Les Deux Pigeons. One side, and **Messenger: Ballet d'Isoline.** And **Messenger: Véronique Overture.** Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by Paul Bonneau. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5412) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$2.99.

Roussel: Le Festin de l'Araignée, Op. 17. One and one-half sides, and **Roussel: Petite Suite pour Orchestre, Op. 39.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1179) \$3.98.

Bizet: L'Arlésienne Suites Nos. 1 & 2 (excerpts). One side, and **Fauré: Pelleas et Mélisande Suite, Op. 80.** Orchestra of the Paris Opera conducted by Pierre Michel le Conte. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8311) \$4.98.

The second (and better) recording of Messenger's *Two Pigeons* Ballet appears this month with first recordings (LP) of *Ballet d'Isoline* and *Véronique Overture*. As little of Messenger's music is currently on discs, this record will be welcome to collectors of French ballet music. . . . It will be tough to beat Ansermet on the two lovely Roussel works he essays here; his version of the hungry spider is complete, and he is right at home in the score. . . . There is plenty of competition for the Bizet-Fauré record by M. le Conte, and although Capitol's reproduction is second to none, as exemplified by this disc, we would prefer other versions—Stok on *L'Arlésienne* and Paray on *Pelleas*; Paray includes on the same disc (*ME-MG-50035, TNR Oct. '54) snatches of *The Spider's Feast*.

CONCERTO

Nielsen: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 33. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Danish State Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. One and one-half sides, and **Debussy: La Fille aux Cheveux de Lin.** And **Ravel: Kaddish.** And **Falla: La Vida Breve—Spanish Dance.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-22) \$4.98.

When the Danish National Orchestra went on a



tour of England, and later when it came to the United States, the name of Carl Nielsen suddenly came to light. About fifteen of his works are now in the LP lists, and the genius of this great Danish composer is now revealed again in the first recording of his *Violin Concerto*. This is a concerto of major proportions, of genuine substance, and the work of a real master. Nielsen does not dip into the bag of composers' formula, skim the surface with the usual assortment of violinistic tricks, and call it a concerto. Here is a work that makes a bold impression on first hearing, carries the listener along every minute, and leaves him with a feeling of real satisfaction. Where has this work been hiding? Of the countless thousands of concert appearances of violin soloists who have played the same works over and over again, it is amazing in this age that none ever got to work and put this concerto before the public and gave it a rightful place in the repertoire. It will be to Menuhin's everlasting credit if this disc does it.

The first movement is a long, vital work that has a lot to say, and does it in the manner of all grand concertos. The other two movements are lighter by comparison, and this plan is preferable to "loading" the finale for the sake of effect. We found it all wonderful listening, and urge all who like violin concertos to hear this record. Menuhin offers an intense performance, technically secure, and charged with enthusiasm; his accompaniment by Wölkke is excellent. The three encores which Menuhin plays are models of the art: the Debussy is tender and gossamer, the Falla full of spirit, and they are all welcome on this splendid disc. Reproduction throughout is of the best; the surfaces of our disc were exceptional in smoothness and lack of noise. S.

Persichetti: Concerto for Piano, Four Hands, Op.

56. Vincent and Dorothea Persichetti (piano). One side, and **Creston: Sonata for Saxophone and Piano, Op. 19.** Vincent J. Abato (saxophone) and Paul Creston (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4989) \$4.98.

Roussel: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op.

36. Leila Gousseau (piano) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Paul Sacher. One-half side, and **Roussel: Sinfonietta for Strings, Op. 52.** One-half side, and **Roussel: Petite Suite for Orchestra, Op. 39.** One-half side, and **Roussel: Concerto for Small Orchestra, Op. 34.** L'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Paul Sacher. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3129) \$3.98.

Philadelphian Vincent Persichetti is appearing more prominently on the scene as a major American composer. Columbia's Modern American Music Series presents a rather unusual work of his, a so-called concerto for piano, four hands unaccompanied. This is for one piano, not two pianos, a medium rather neglected these days, although some duoists are beginning to realize the best four hand

music was written for one piano, not two, by many of the major masters of past generations. You will have to know, understand, and appreciate contemporary trends in music to get the hang of this work; but it can be said that this is music that rings with ingenuity and expertness. Vincent and Dorothea Persichetti play flawlessly.

Paul Creston, an eclectic American composer, has written three works utilizing the saxophone. The present sonata for saxophone is a three movement work, unusually compact, and shows concern for musical values as well as desire to exploit the instrument. The saxophone is an unjustly neglected instrument in classical music; this reviewer has often thought a choir of saxophones would be the most worthwhile addition anyone could bring to a symphony orchestra—better than the dizzy assortment of percussions and toy-counter devices usually introduced. The soloistic possibilities are great also, as you will hear in this sonata, ably played by Vincent Abato.

The all-Roussel disc offers four of his major works, all new to LP except the *Petite Suite*. The *Concerto for Piano* is a short work which did not excite your reviewer very much. The three orchestral works are typically pleasant Roussel music, not long-winded, neatly done, containing melodic appeal, and colored with the Gallic brush. If you enjoy the works of this minor master, here is a fine assortment, well performed and brilliantly recorded. S.

Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47. David

Oistrakh (violin) with the National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alexander Gauk. One side, and **Matchavariani: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.** M. Vayman (violin) with the National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by A. Matchavariani. 1-12" disc (*CSM-CRLP-172) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Romance No. 1 in G, Op. 40. One-half side, and **Beethoven: Concerto in D. Op.**

61. One side, and **Beethoven: Romance No. 2 in F, Op. 50.** Bronislaw Gimpel (violin) with the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9340) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$3.98.

David Oistrakh, magic name in the field of violin playing, is heard in a performance of the Sibelius *Concerto*, and if anyone wants to claim it is the best of the eight now available, we will not be inclined to argue. Here is a performance of searing intensity, propelled by a technique bordering on wizardry. One cannot but admire a performance of this stature. It is futile to compare other recordings, even those that are admittedly excellent, for they cannot surpass this playing, and taken for what it is, this reading is truly a great work of art. The reproduction of the violin is good; the orchestra has not enough prominence, but one is so carried away by Oistrakh that

this is a minor matter.

The pairing for the Sibelius brings the work of a 42 year old Soviet composer, new to us, although he has written reams of probable rubbish with the usual titles that win Stalin prizes. The concerto is played by a competent fiddler, maybe even a mighty good one. However, the talents of all concerned are hopelessly lost in reproduction that this reviewer would have panned fifteen years ago. It sounds like a cross between acoustic recording and early electric studio recording, and it's terrible. Now that they know how to build atomic bombs, we wish the Russians would catch up on recording technique; why doesn't some spy hand them that harmless secret?

Vox has placed the Beethoven works listed above in seemingly odd sequence, but the idea is good, for it places the first movement on the first side and the second and third movements on the second side—the Romances falling at the beginning of the first and at the end of the second sides. Bronislaw Gimpel, now an American citizen, is a celebrated violinist. He does an admirable job with the great Beethoven concerto, and he is very well recorded. We could not claim it the best on LP, but it is far from the poorest on LP. The playing has remarkable security and technical finesse, but it lacks a little in drive and inspiration. Half a dozen of the big name artists are to be preferred in this work. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 6 in B-flat, K. 238. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 8 in C, K. 246.** Ingrid Haebler (piano) with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Vienna) conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9290) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$3.98.

Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25. Emil Gilels (piano) with the National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. One side, and **Taktakishvili: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.** A. Iokheles (piano) with the National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by A. Stasevitch. 1-12" disc (*CSM-CRLP-191) \$3.98.

The gifted young Viennese pianist offers two little known concertos on this disc, her third to be released of Mozart concertos. These two are available only by Balsam, who started with No. 1 and went right through all the early ones. We would prefer the present disc to Balsam on matters of better reproduction alone. Miss Haebler is a most talented player, as we mentioned in previous reviews, and her style is just ideal for the music. The concertos are the epitome of light, graceful, sweet music, simple but skilled, and these performances reveal all their beauty. This disc can be highly recommended to avid Mozarteans.

One half column of notes of no great importance tell us very little about Otar Taktakishvili (figured

out how to pronounce that one yet?) but two columns of notes accompany the well known Mendelssohn concerto. Otar T. was born in 1924 and finished his studies at the Tbilisi Conservatory in 1947. He has written stacks of music in many different forms, and, yessir, you guessed it, he has won Stalin prizes. His symphony No. 1 copped the coveted prize in 1951, and this concerto received the same award in 1952. We will now quote in full from the notes concerning this concerto: "Taktakishvili's tone quality has a very lively characteristic, which is mostly concentrated on his very bright, nationalistic quality. His rich instrumentation is both melodic and brilliant." That's it, folks. We have a word for it over here: double-talk. As for the music, our ears told us it sounds all right, does not go far from dead center, and is rather contrived and according to formula. He is no Shostakovich or Prokofiev. How is the Mendelssohn? We never got beyond the eighth bar, the reproduction is something out of the past, just impossible. S.

Rodrigo: Concierto de Aranjuez. Narciso Yepes (guitar) with the Chamber Orchestra of Madrid conducted by Ataúlfo Argentina. One side, and **Falla: Nights in the Gardens of Spain.** Gonzalo Soriano (piano) with the Chamber Orchestra of Madrid conducted by Ataúlfo Argentina. 1-12" disc in box (*L-TW-91019) \$4.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under PIANO.

CHORAL



Rossini: Stabat Mater (complete). (Sung in Latin). Maria Stader (soprano), Marianna Radev (mezzo-soprano), Ernst Häfliger (tenor), Kim Borg (bass), Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral (Berlin), Chorus and Orchestra of RIAS conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. Three sides, and **Mozart: Exsultate, Jubilate, K. 165.** Maria Stader (soprano) with the RIAS Symphony Orchestra Conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 2-12" discs in box (*D-DX-132) \$7.96.

Rossini's *Stabat Mater* makes its second appearance on LP discs this month in a performance by Ferenc Fricsay and the RIAS orchestra, chorus and soloists. The first recording of this altogether admirable work was on the Oceanic label (TNR Nov. '51). It was received very well at that time by this column; but the passage of three and a half years, with their attendant technical advances, would seem to make it sound much less impressive from the vantage point June 1955. And yet it is, *mirabile dictu*, far superior, both artistically and technically, to this present issue by Decca.

With the exception of the always excellent Maria Stader, the soloists are a dull lot. This stricture applies particularly to basso Kim Borg and to the tenor, Ernst Häfliger. This is especially hard to understand in the case of Herr Borg, for he has been heard previously in the fabulous HMV recording of *Boris Godounow* and has sung very well, indeed. Here his

voice sounds muffled and wobbly—maybe it is a lack of the proper sense of style that makes his *Pro peccatis* such an ordinary contribution. Ditto for Häfliger's singing of *Cujus animam*. Frau Radev is adequate but not in any way distinguished. Maria Stader does magnificently with the fiendishly difficult solo part of the *Inflammatum* and is a tower of strength in the concerted numbers. This listener found Fricsay's direction on the stodgy side—no real conviction or passion. The chorus and orchestra, taking their cue from the conductor, respond in kind.

Astonishingly fine, however, and totally different is the first really adequate recording of Mozart's glorious motet *Exsultate, jubilate*. With Maria Stader very much in the vein and Ferenc Fricsay in his element, the performance is a wonderful one—it is a shame it is wedded to the lengthy *Stabat Mater*. Maybe Decca will re-press it separately some day—it certainly deserves it. Notes, texts and other information is supplied. Mediocre sound for the Rossini, first class for the Mozart. W.

English Madrigals of Weelkes and Bateson. The Randolph Singers conducted by David Randolph. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5361) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$2.99.

CONTENTS: *Death Hath Deprived Me, As Wanton Birds, O Care Thou Wilt Despatch Me, Hence Care Thou Art Too Cruel, Lord When I Think, Cease Sorrows Now, Thule the Period of Cosmography, The Andalusian Merchant* (Weelkes); *I Heard a Noise, When to the Gloomy Woods, Camilla Fair Tripped o'er the Plain, Come Sorry Help Me to Lament, Come Follow Me, She with a Cruel Frown, Cupid in a Bed of Roses, Cytherea Smiling Said* (Bateson).

Choral Works of Victoria, Anchieta, Binchois, Palestrina and Lassus. Sistine Chapel Choir conducted by Bartolucci. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-706) \$4.98.

A better than average sampling of late 16th and early 17th century music is available on these two discs, one devoted to secular music, the other to church or liturgical music.

The madrigalists represented are Thomas Weelkes and Thomas Bateson, each with eight selections. Very little is known of the lives of either of these two composers, but their music speaks eloquently of their very great gifts. David Randolph not only directs his singers in virtually impeccable performances, he also supplies very persuasive jacket notes that go a long way towards making the music more enjoyable because of his insight and enthusiasm. The recorded sound is good and the texts are supplied.

Equally impressive is the Period disc of some twelve selections by the Sistine Chapel Choir. Of the twelve, there are seven by Victoria, two by Palestrina and one each by Lassus, Anchieta and Gilles de Binchois. The latter was one of those fabulous Renaissance characters who was first a soldier, then a chaplain (in the

service of the Duke of Burgundy), but always a composer. Interest in Anchieta, historically speaking, centers around the fact that he was chaplain to Ferdinand and Isabella—his dates are 1450–1523.

The Victoria and Palestrina music is typical of both the men and the times and is exquisitely sung by the Sistine Choir.

Both discs can be recommended very highly, although their appeal, it must be admitted, is apt to be limited. For those who will take the trouble (perhaps a nicer way to put it would be to say, those who have the time and disposition) to investigate and learn a little about the music and the times will be amply repaid. W.

OPERA

Smetana: Dalibor (complete). Five sides, and **Fibich: The Bride from Messina** (highlights). (Sung in Czech). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre conducted by Jaroslav Krombholc. 3-12" discs in album (*CSM-CRLP-131/3) \$12.94.

Smetana, who certainly is a "one opera" composer so far as this country is concerned, wrote some seven other major pieces for the lyric theatre besides the deservedly popular *Bartered Bride*. To be sure, the average phonophile's acquaintance with these other operas has been confined to isolated excerpts; but now, with the release of the Prague National Theatre's production of *Dalibor* as recorded by Colosseum, there are now two of the lesser known works available, i.e. the present album and an earlier issue of *The Kiss*.

Dalibor is a magnificent work, tuneful, stirring and invested with a sense of drama that makes it a compelling and genuine musical experience. It is, as the note in the libretto states, "...an overflowing kettle of passions, emotions, sympathies, hatreds, love and self-denying sacrifice." The opera was a "popular," if not a critical success at its first performance on 16 May 1868. Subsequent attempts to re-introduce it were unsuccessful and Smetana died believing it to be a failure. It reappeared, however, in 1886, had a great success and has remained popular to this day, although its popularity is confined to Central Europe. There have been no performances of the opera by any major American opera company.

The native Czech artists in this recording have, for the most part, adequate voices. They obviously understand the idiom and sing with fervor and abandon. Beno Blachut, in the title role, is a good robust tenor and he brings considerable conviction to the part. Maria Podvalová, the heroine, also does a creditable job as *do Václav Bednár* (The King) and Theodore Srubar (Budigov). The direction by Jaroslav Krombholc is good.

Chief fly in the ointment is the poor quality of

the recorded sound. There are rattles, hollow sounding bass notes and generally hashed-up highs. It sounds at least five or six years old and might have been taken from a radio broadcast. Despite all these drawbacks, however, *Dalibor* as presented on these discs was a thrilling experience. In view of the sub-standard tonal quality, it is suggested that those interested hear it before buying it.

Interest in the excerpts from Fibich's *Bride of Messina* that occupy the last side of the set is purely academic. Not of the high musical calibre of *Dalibor*, it suffers even more from the poor sound.

Moniuszko: Halka (complete). (Sung in Russian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. 2-12" discs in album (*CSM-CRLP-188/9) \$8.96.

Poland's contribution to the operatic repertoire, Moniuszko's *Halka*, achieves its maiden recording under the aegis of Colosseum. It is a work that seems somewhat derivative (Glinka and other Russian influences are fairly noticeable) but very tuneful, and it has a few scenes of real dramatic forcefulness. Unfortunately this production, sung in Russian, is taken from extremely poor quality tapes (probably made from a radio broadcast) that do not speak well for Russian techniques although, in fairness, they may be very old. The frequency response is limited, and there are many rattles and blastings in the concerted numbers.

The soloists, insofar as can be determined, are adequate, and the performance has a certain drive and life that could have made it reasonably persuasive. The low quality level, however, puts it on the dubious list. Ardent Poles are cautioned on one other count—it is, as pointed out above, sung in Russian, and the whole affair has a strongly Russian flavor.

English texts only and these pasted on the inside of the album, surely the most inconvenient (and the cheapest) method of handling the matter. Hear this one first and, if that is not possible, leave it alone. W.

Janáček: Aus einem Totenhaus ("From the House of the Dead") (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Netherlands Opera conducted by Alexander Krannhals. 2-12" discs in box (*EPIC SC-6005) \$9.96.

Leoš Janáček (1854-1928) has been pretty well served on LP records. There have been recordings of his *Slavonic Mass*, various items of chamber music, some orchestral pieces, and now his posthumous opera, *Aus einem Totenhaus*. Such attention to a composer usually bespeaks a fairly wide public interest in his work. To his admirers, then, it is only necessary to say, in effect, "here it is"; or, alternatively, "come and get it!"

It is for those whose acquaintance with Janáček's

music is of the nodding variety that the ensuing remarks are directed. The libretto of this "opera" is based on Dostoyevski's novel of the same name, and it is as gruesome and ugly a story as can be imagined (in fact, if your imagination runs along these lines, it would be advisable to consult a psychiatrist). The music Janáček has written for the libretto he compounded himself is as brutal and violent as the book.

The large cast is competent; in fact they do a difficult job well, for there is no singing to speak of—the opera is made up largely of recitative or perhaps, more accurately, *sprechstimme*. The choral and orchestral parts are well sung and played under the direction of Alexander Krannhals.

It must have been this sort of music that Aldous Huxley had in mind when he wrote, back in 1930:

"We listen to a music from which almost every expression of a tragical, a mournful, a tender sentiment has been excluded—a music that deliberately confines itself to the expression of physical energy . . . and mechanical motion. (This) music . . . exalts the crowd, the merely muscular body, and (it) despises the soul and solitude and nature."

The libretto and English translation are supplied, as are notes on the genesis of the opera. This is definitely one to investigate before buying. W.

Robinson: Sandhog. (Sung in English). Earl Robinson (singing and piano) with Waldo Salt (narrator). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-9001) \$4.98.

Sandhog is classified by Earl Robinson and Waldo Salt, its composers, as a "folk" opera; it was produced last November at the Phoenix Theatre in New York, with a cast of forty including ten principals. On the present Vanguard disc Mr. Robinson sings all the parts and accompanies himself on the piano; he is able to sing duets with himself by combining, on magnetic tape, the two parts sung separately. Mr. Salt serves as narrator and reads the speaking parts.

If you can stomach the politics expressed here (some persons confuse the right to the pursuit of happiness with the right to happiness, itself), you will find that Mr. Robinson, composer of *Joe Hill* (1935) and *Ballad for Americans* (1939), can spin a folk tune with the best of them, and this score contains several, such as *Johnny-O* and *Good Old Days*. Robinson sings them with conviction. One should say that, in spite of a story of questionable taste and in spite of limited forces available, the disc will be accredited a successful effort.

VOCAL



Ruth Etting Recordings. Ruth Etting (vocals) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5050) \$4.98.

Love Me or Leave Me. Doris Day (vocals) with orchestra conducted by Percy Faith. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-710) \$3.95.

Frankly, we almost ignored even listing the Ruth

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 ** Indicates 45 rpm.

Etting record listed above. We wouldn't have except for the tremendous plug Walter Winchell gave it the other night on his TV show, with words to the effect that no one could sing a torch song like Ruth Etting. Mr. Winchell is entitled to his opinion; but one would never guess, from this disc, that he were right. We, for one, could name several dozen who could; and not the least of these is the beauteous Doris Day, who is currently starring in the movie *Love Me or Leave Me*, based on Miss Etting's rather unusual life story. Miss Day can belt out *Everybody Loves My Baby*, coo *Mean to Me*, or cry *You Made Me Love You*, and does these and nine others on her record which sells for \$1.15 and is worth twice whatever Miss Etting's is worth.

Brahms: Neue Liebeslieder Walzer, Op. 65. One side, and **Brahms Songs.** Flore Wend (soprano), Nancy Vaughn (mezzo-soprano), Hugues Cuenod (tenor) and Doda Conrad (bass) with Nadia Boulanger and Jean Françaix (pianos). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9650) \$3.98.

CONTENTS OF SONGS: *An die Heimat*, Op. 64, No. 1; *Der Abend*, Op. 64, No. 2; *Fragen*, Op. 64, No. 3; *O schöne Nacht*, Op. 92, No. 1; *Sehnsucht*, Op. 112, No. 1; *Nächtens*, Op. 112, No. 2.

Brahms: (4) ernste Gesänge, Op. 121. One side, and **Brahms Songs.** Bruce Boyce (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*OL-50044) \$4.98.

CONTENTS OF SONGS: *Wie bist du, meine Königin*, Op. 32, No. 1; *Wie Melodien zieht es*, Op. 105, No. 1; *Komm bald*, Op. 97, No. 5; *Die Mainacht*, Op. 43, No. 2; *Ach, wende diesen Blick*, Op. 57, No. 4; *Die Schnur, die Perle an Perle*, Op. 57, No. 7; *Wir wandelten*, Op. 96, No. 2; *Minnelied*, Op. 71, No. 5.

Brahms wrote two sets of vocal waltzes of which this set is the second or, as he called it, the *Neue Liebeslieder Walzer*. It seems that in Viennese homes there were many who enjoyed singing and playing the piano, hence these vocal "quartets" accompanied by piano—four hands. Some of the fifteen songs that comprise the *Neue Liebeslieder Walzer* are set as solos for the singers, and there is also a duet. Fourteen of the poems are by the Nurnberg poet, Georg Daumer, and the group Brahms set here was originally called *Polydora*. Curiously the last song is based on a poem by Goethe! It is a sort of philosophic ending to the cycle—it would almost seem that Brahms had a sense of humor after all. The second side of the disc is devoted to other songs for the same forces but in a more serious vein. The four singers are all excellent vocalists and musicians, Mme. Boulanger and M. Françaix are extremely competent. Good sound, fine notes but no texts, this omission being a very serious one in this instance.

Bruce Boyce, for l' Oiseau-Lyre, sings the eighth LP version of the *Vier ernste Gesänge* along with some eight other songs. Vocally and interpretively he leaves little to be desired. Special mention must be made of Mlle. Bonneau's fine support at the piano. There are no notes worthy of the name and, as might be expected, no texts. Does l' Oiseau-Lyre (London International) assume each prospective purchaser has a sufficient knowledge of German or knows the texts of the songs? If one works on such a premise, one's sales will be limited indeed.

W.

Italian Airs. Magda Laszlo (soprano) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5375) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$2.99.

CONTENTS: *Un certo non so che* (Vivaldi); *Come raggio di sol* (Caldara); *Ogni pena piu spietata*, *La passione VII*, *La passione IV*, *La passione II* (Pergolesi); *Piacere d'amore* (Martini); *Gia il sole dal gange* (A. Scarlatti); *Caro loccio dolce nodo* (Gasparini); *Sen corre l'agnelletta* (Sarri); *Deh piu a me non v'ascondete* (Bononcini); *Piangete ohime piangete* (Carissimi); *Danza danza* (Durante).

Wolf: (3) Michelangelo Lieder. One side, and **Wolf Songs.** Heinz Rehfuss (baritone) accompanied by Hans Willi Hausslein (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9182) \$2.98.

CONTENTS OF SONGS: *Der Freund*; *Der Musikant*; *Verschwiegene Liebe*; *Gesang Weylas*; *Storchenbotschaft*.

This is the second disc by Miss Laszlo devoted to old Italian songs and airs and, like its predecessor (TNR June '52) it is, by and large, an excellently selected and performed group of songs. The program covers the reasonably familiar; *Come raggio di sol* and *Gia il sole dal gange* are examples of this category, while the Gasparini, Carissimi and Pergolesi songs (with the possible exception of *Ogni pena piu spietata*, which had a very familiar ring to it) are new to records. The three *Passione* songs by Pergolesi are of particular interest and merit. Just what *Piacere d'amore*, better known as *Plasir d'amour* is doing in a collection of Italian airs is hard to understand, especially since "Martini" was born Johann P. A. Schwarzenndorf. Ordinarily, however, it is a very beautiful song, welcome anywhere but Miss Laszlo sings it in execrable French and introduces all sorts of changes in the vocal line that are pretty bad—the only sour spot in a fine record, however. Good sound and texts with translations complete the offering.

London's modest little disc of Wolf songs is so-so. Rehfuss has a good voice and sings well here although he does not seem impressed with his material—a circumstance that also left this reviewer

calm, cool and collected. Once rid of the *Michelangelo Lieder*, he perks up a little and seems more interested. Good sound here, too, but no texts. First rate accompaniments by Hans Willi Hausslein. W.

Moussorgsky: Sunless Cycle. One side, and **Prokofiev: (5) Songs to Poetry of Anna Akhmatova.** And **Gretchaninov: (6) Songs.** (Sung in Russian). Maria Kurenko (soprano) accompanied by Vsevolod Pastukhoff (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8310) \$4.98.

Janáček: Tagebuch eines Verschollenen. (Sung in German). Ernt Häflinger (tenor), Cora Canne Meyer (mezzo-soprano), and three members of the Netherlands Chamber Choir accompanied by Felix de Nobel (piano). 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3121) \$3.98.

Maria Kurenko seems to be able to go on and on, and this disc of Russian songs shows her to be in excellent voice; of course, her artistry is, as always, above approach. Musically speaking, the songs have a tendency to become monotonous, although, in all fairness, it is doubtful whether the three sets of songs were intended to be played through at a sitting. The Moussorgsky *Sunless Cycle* is, as the name implies, a rather gloomy group of songs with such characteristic titles as *In Four Walls*, *Bitterness of Love* and *By the Water*, to mention but three, the last having for its closing lines the idea "... the waves tempt me ... shall I obey the call?" *Sunless* is putting it mildly. Prokofiev and Gretchaninov are a little less gloomy and, curiously enough, a little less convincing, although Prokofiev has his moments in a song called *The Grey-Eyed King*. Gretchaninov is the most conventional of the three (is he still living? He was born in 1864!), but after some of the stuff these weary ears have been exposed to, there are far worse sins than conventionality.

Janáček's *Dairy of One Who Vanished* is a cycle for tenor and mezzo-soprano consisting of 21 songs and a piano interlude. In a Moravian mountain village, we are told, an honest, hard working peasant lad disappeared under mysterious circumstances. He was at first presumed to be the victim of crime or disaster, but a few days later notes were found that shed light on the secret. The song cycle is made up from the poems he left.

The music for all this is in the "modern" idiom, although it was written in 1916. There are very few tunes as such and this writer freely admits that one hearing is not enough to grasp the meaning of the work. There are moments of real beauty, yet some parts seem to be banal, even dull. Häflinger and Meyer sing well and, if one may be permitted the liberty, accompanist Nobel does a noble job. Good sound—English texts only. A provocative record, recommended to those interested in the esoteric. W.

Music of Purcell, Jenkins and Locke. Alfred Deller (counter-tenor) with the Leonhardt Baroque Ensemble, and Consort of Viols conducted by Gustav Leonhardt (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*BGB-547) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *The Faerie Queene*—Secrecie's Song, Mystery's Song, The Complaint (Purcell); *If ever I more riches did desire*—Here let my life (Purcell); *Prelude, Air and Hornpipe* (harpsichord) (Purcell); *Welcome to all the Pleasures*—Here the Deities approve (Purcell); *Dioclesian*—Since my dear Astrea's Sight (Purcell); *Suite in D minor* (harpsichord) (Purcell); *4-Part Consort for Viols* (Locke); *Pavane for Four Viols* (Jenkins).

Music of the baroque era has always exerted a peculiar fascination for this writer, so it is with particular pleasure that he reviewed this really superb Bach Guild disc devoted to the art of Henry Purcell and two of his contemporaries. The record, a nice combination of vocal and instrumental works, is primarily devoted to the music of Purcell. Excerpts from the *Faerie Queen* and several miscellaneous works are sung with style, intelligence and sure musicianship by that extraordinary phenomenon Alfred Deller, counter-tenor; or, to be more specific, male alto. This is a sort of falsetto singing ... extremely effective in music of this type. In fact, Purcell himself was a first-class counter-tenor, although his natural voice was bass.

Mr. Deller, accompanied by various viols and recorders sings his way through the Purcell in a distinguished manner. Mr. Leonhardt plays two harpsichord suites of Purcell's, while the "consort of viols," a quartet consisting of two treble viols and two bass viols, performs a Purcell *Fantasia*, the Locke *Consort of four parts* and the Jenkins *Pavane*. These instrumental pieces are exceptionally fine, being moving to a degree that this writer did not think possible.

Recorded sound is of the very best, and Sidney Beck's notes add to the listener's enjoyment. This disc makes a fine companion to the same group's Elisabethan and Jacobean Music (TNR May '55). W.

A Square Talk on Popular Music; or, *The Decline and Fall of the Popular Song.* Anna Russell (comédienne) with Jimmy Carroll and his *Miserable Five*. One side, and **A Survey of Singing from Madrigals to Modern Opera.** Anna Russell (comédienne) with Eugene Rankin (piano) and Arthur Hoberman (flute). 1-12" disc (*CML-5036) \$4.98.

John Chapman, who wrote the jacket notes for this latest Anna Russell LP, says that Miss Russell is the greatest music critic of our time. "Does Miss Russell think the platform manner of a lady singer is too coy? If she does, she doesn't say so; she takes a short-cut and is so." Her *Square Talk on Popular Music* made the tears roll down our prespiring cheek,

and her *Survey of Singing* was just too much. One example: "Nowadays when madrigals are sung, they are done very professionally by ladies with flute-like voices and rather emasculated-sounding gentlemen, and the effect is very perfect, if a little bloodless..." She runs through the not-so-well-known (she wrote it) madrigal, *Let Us Hang the Holly*, followed by *Come Lovely Death*, *Wir Gehen in den Automaten*, *Yesteryear*, *O Gentle Bird with Feathered Breast*, *Anaemia's Death Scene*, and an aria from *The Psychiatrist*. (All Miss Russell's repertoire are original compositions).

Miss Russell has three other records: *Anna Russell Sings?* (TNR Dec. '52), *Anna Russell Sings! Again?* (TNR Oct. '53), and *Anna Russell's Guide to Concert Audiences* (TNR Nov. '54).

Music for Tired Lovers. Woody Herman (vocals) with Earl Garner (piano) and rhythm accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-651) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *My Melancholy Baby*; *I Hadn't Any-one Till You*; *Let's Fall in Love*; *Moonglow*; *I Don't Know Why*; *You've Got Me Crying Again*; *If I Could Be with You*; *I'm Beginning To See the Light*; *As Time Goes By*; *After You've Gone*; *I'll See You in My Dreams*.

We must confess to having been intrigued by the cover of this disc. It shows a very inviting chick, clad in a negligee, sitting on one of those modern love seats which scarcely leaves room for two. Seated next to her, with his arm around her, is a slightly balding gent in a tuxedo. And he's asleep! If he's as tired as all that, he'd never make it to the phonograph to put this record on. The gal doesn't look a bit tired, incidentally; we hope we never get as exhausted as that gentleman, but if we ever did, Woody Herman would never wake us up, we're sure. The dreamy and expert piano playing of Erroll Garner is always a joy to hear.

Once Over Lightly. Alan Arkin (vocals & guitar). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-21) \$3.50.

CONTENTS: *A Knave Is a Knave*; *Kisses, Sweeter than Wine*; *Tom-with-a-Grin*; *Crawdad Song*; *Colorado Trail*; *The Mad Count*; *So Early in the Morning*; *Tobacco Union*; *I'm Gonna Marry in the Fall*; *Great Granddad*; *Lavender Cowboy*; *Anne Boleyn*.

Sin Songs. Ed McCurdy (vocals) with guitar accompaniment. 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-24) \$3.50.

CONTENTS: *The Jolly Boatsman*; *How Happy Is She*; *I Once Had Virtue*; *The Gambler's Song*; *The Good Boy's Song*; *Good Old Mountain Dew*; *Rye Whiskey*; *Tobacco Is an Indian Weed*; *Three Pretty Maids*; *Young People Who Delight in Sin*; *Poor Polly, the Mad Girl*; *Gambling on the Sabbath Day*; *John Adkin's Farewell*; *An Address to All Concerning Death*.

It would seem that the demand for good recordings of folk music is not lessening, and we have previously called our readers' attentions to the excellent folk

records being issued by Elektra. We have two fine examples this month: Alan Arkin sings very pleasantly some dozen songs (including some 2½ that "aren't folk songs" according to the jacket notes); and Ed McCurdy sings seven "pro" and seven "con" sin songs. Both discs should find a ready market among the many collectors of folk records; they are well done and feature excellent reproduction.

Interested readers may secure a complete Elektra catalog from the publisher of this bulletin without charge upon request.

Irish Festival Singers. Irish Festival Singers. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65016) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *The Palatine's Daughter*; *Danny Boy*; *The Spanish Lady*; *I Have a Bonnet Trimmed with Blue*; *The Stuttering Lovers*; *Norah O'Neale*; *The Star of the County Down*; *Padraic the Fiddler*; *A Ballynure Ballad*; *The Foggy Dew* (harp solo); plus 7 folk songs in Gaelic.

Songs of Corsica. Martha Angelici (soprano) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65017) \$3.98.

We seem to recall having seen the Irish Festival Singers on "Toast of the Town" several weeks back, although we can't be certain; at any rate, it is a first-class organization with extremely good soloists who put everything they have into each of these numbers. The titles listed are sung in English, and there are a couple of solos for Irish harp and seven numbers sung in Gaelic. These are accomplished, trained singers (not of the rough, folk variety); you will therefore enjoy the singing just as much (or more than?) the songs.

Martha Angelici is also a trained soprano now with the French Opéra Comique; and, being Corsican by birth, she is evidently suited to these songs. The titles would be meaningless, which is why we did not list them; there are a dozen, and it would be difficult to select any that were better than others. Suffice it to say that they will probably mean more to a Corsican than to others; they were all either transcribed from original folk tunes or actually composed by François Agostini, which may account for a certain amount of sameness in the numbers.

Christiné: Phi-Phi. (Sung in French). Jean Richard, Henri Genès, supporting soloists, and l'Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by Franck Pourcel. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5413) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$2.99.

Chabrier: Une Education Manquée. (Sung in French). Christiane Castelli, Xavier Depraz, Caudine Collart with l'Orchestre symphonique de Paris conducted by Charles Bruck. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-460) \$4.98.

Two French operettas enliven, to a certain extent, this month's lists. The first is a second recording of Henri Christiné's 1918 opus, *Phi-Phi*. Briefly, it is

a sort of jazzed-up imitation of Offenbach (not nearly as good, by the way)—a sort of composite *Orphée aux enfers* and *La Belle Hélène*. Even this could be amusing except for the fact that the arrangement, the work of one M. Claude Dufrene, stresses only the risqué portions of the score. An earlier recording on Vox (TNR Aug. '52) still sounds pretty good and is in much better taste, both as to contents and as to jacket "art." The soloists in this new recording are capable (if, at times, overly "cute") but incline towards hamminess. Chief interest in the work lies in its undeniable nostalgic appeal, for it is musically lightweight stuff indeed.

Chabrier's *L'Education Manquée* (*The Incomplete Education*) is another suggestive (and rather silly) French musical farce. Quite honestly your reviewer was hard put to find anything good about the disc. It is not funny, it's not in very good taste, and musically it is nothing but a collection of colorless and characterless tunes that are fairly well sung by the soloists. The best that can be said for it is that it takes only two record sides. Better hear this disc before spending your money.

W.



PIANO

Falla: Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Aldo Ciccolini (piano) with l'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by Ernesto Halffter. One side, and **Falla: Homages.** L'Orchestre national de la Radiodiffusion française conducted by Ernesto Halffter. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35134TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35134) \$4.98.

Falla: Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Gonzalo Soriano (piano) with the Chamber Orchestra of Madrid conducted by Ataúlfo Argenta. One side, and **Rodrigo: Concierto de Aranjuez.** Narciso Yepes (guitar) with the Chamber Orchestra of Madrid conducted by Ataúlfo Argenta. 1-12" disc in box (*L-TW-91019) \$4.98.

Falla's lovely *Noches en los jardines de España* receives two new recordings this month, and we must confess to having been enchanted with the reading of Aldo Ciccolini, who properly projects the piano as an instrument of the orchestra (the work is definitely not a concerto); Falla undoubtedly attempted to depict, not without harshness, the very soul of Spain in this work; and the piano and the orchestra working separately, yet together, are meshed, so to speak, to project the rhythms, pulsations and outbursts of the piece. Mr. Ciccolini obviously understands this, and he and the orchestra under conductor Halffter have managed a performance second, in our opinion, to none. And this comes as somewhat of a surprise, for Rubinstein formerly seemed to us to have the definitive version of this piece. Not a little of the credit must accrue to Angel, whose perfect reproduction gives the work just the right perspective—not

strident, not dull, but full, resounding, lush.

Mr. Soriano, another new name to us, offers a good performance; but it is not in a class with Ciccolini's. And London has given us reproduction that is all that Angel's was not: strident, steely, and featuring the piano at the expense of the orchestra.

Two first LP recordings accompany the two versions of the *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*: Falla's *Homenajes* and Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*. Falla's piece is in four parts, representing homages to Arbos, Debussy, Dukas and Pedrell, each composed at different dates and under different conditions. The work seems to hang together, in spite of these handicaps, and Mr. Halffter and the orchestra perform excellently. Rodrigo's *Guitar Concerto* abounds in Spanish rhythms which we found quite appealing, and Señor Yepes is an able guitarist. The work is easy to grasp, and London's reproduction works to advantage here to feature the soloist which, in this work, is eminently proper.

J.

Bartók: (40) Pieces for Children. One and one-half sides, and **Bartók: Sonatina.** Geza Anda (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35126TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35126) \$4.98.

Modern Piano Music for Children. Marga Richter (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3147) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Sunday Afternoon Music*, *The Young Pioneers* (Copland); *The Irishman Dances* (Cowell); (8) *Piano Pieces* (Diamond); *Lullaby*, *Slumber Song* and *Siris Dance* (Hovhaness); *Butterfly*, *Seagull*, *March* (Lawrence); *Little Piano Book* (Persichetti); (2) *Short Suites for Young Pianists* (Richter); *Solemn Song*, *Buttinskij March* (Skelly); *Eccentric Dance* (Thomson); (3) *Children's Profiles* (Wolfe).

That Bartók wrote a perfectly charming set of some 85 pieces for children is more or less well known, and if they are as yet unfamiliar to you, you'll find that the young Geza Anda plays these 40 as well as you'd want; Angel's reproduction of the piano is all but perfect. The lovely little *Sonatina*, used as a second side filler, is well chosen and fits in well with the other pieces.

Marga Richter has selected a number of piano works for children written by modern American composers. Some are relatively simple exercises, others somewhat more complex; and these works were designed to offer works that the student could play in order properly to train himself for the more advanced classical works in the modern idiom—thus offering the teacher some "up-to-date" material for the student and some "new" pieces for those pupils whose ability may not be up to a Beethoven sonata and whose tastes have become jaded by the "standard" classical teaching material. Young students of the piano could very well be interested in these works, and might like to hear them played by an expert.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 28 in A, Op. 101.** Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5357) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$2.99.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109.** István Nádas (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-718) \$4.98.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111. And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109.** And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 31 in A-flat, Op. 110.** Yves Nat (piano). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-110) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc is \$2.99.

Beethoven's *Sonata No. 30 in E* has been given three new readings—two by pianists well-known to readers of THE NEW RECORDS and one by a newcomer (at least, to us). These readings come on three discs, each with different couplings.

Badura-Skoda and Nat, as we said, are well known to most of us; and their readings are well up to the high standards they have set. In the *Op. 109* competition we thought Nat won by a whisker; and his disc does give us three sonatas, to two from Badura-Skoda. But Mr. Nádas, while he plays the same notes, doesn't seem to be reading the same directions. The jacket blurb states that, in writing of Nádas' recitals, the critics were enthusiastic about his "individuality of vision." Well, if you want some Beethoven "interpreted" by Mr. Nádas, here it is.

Granados: Goyescas. Amparo Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1925) \$3.98.

Miss Iturbi's interpretation of Granados' sentimental *Goyescas* was said to so move the composer that he arranged a private recital for her, and she has been identified with this music throughout her professional career. Now the rendition of Miss Iturbi has been committed to discs; we found her playing above reproach in every way and have no hesitation in placing this version at the top of the list of available recordings.

ORGAN



Franck: Choral in E. And **Franck: Choral in B minor.** One side, and **Franck: Choral in A minor.** And **Franck: Prelude, Fugue and Variation.** Ernest White, playing the studio organ of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin (New York). 1-12" disc (*DISCURIOSITIES BCL-7280) \$5.95.

Elmore: Rhythmic Suite. One side, and **Elmore: Rhumba.** And **Boellmann: Ronde Francaise.** And **Roger-Ducasse: Pastorale.** Edward Linzel, playing the studio organ of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin (New York). 1-12" disc (*DISCURIOSITIES BCL-7201) \$5.95.

These interesting organ records hardly come under

the heading of curiosities, but the issuing firm calls itself Discuriosities, and is responsible for the by now well known item called "The Investigator"—a superb parody of a certain senator (if you have not yet heard it, digress from the organ department for a while and have a good laugh with it). (TNR Jan. '55).

Discuriosities would have done a greater service to have moved their microphones into the Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, rather than set them up in the studio, for we would then have had the atmosphere which the Franck music needs, namely a little resonance, to say nothing of the splendor of the unusual organ in that church. However, here is the record, and we will discuss what we hear on it.

The *Choral No. 1 in E* opens up with a rather bizarre registration, heightened by the dead (and, brother, we mean totally, completely dead) acoustics of the studio. White soon sweetens up the sound, and things go along nicely, for after all, Ernest White is one of our finest organists, who rarely turns in a poor reading of anything. The *Choral No. 2 in B minor* has its variations set forth with skill and imagination. The beautiful *No. 3* suffers from the start from lack of resonance and too much harshness, but it is played the way many of us wish we could do it—it lacks only the atmosphere it deserves, a warmer, more resonant hall.

The secular music of Philadelphia organist Robert Elmore fares well on the concert organ in the studio, probably better than it would in a resonant church building. This is music of blazing virtuosity, and it is given a brilliant reading by Linzel. The *Rhumba* is not dance music, but rather an evocation of this dance form, and it is one of the most fascinating pieces written for organ in our time. His *Rhythmic Suite* is in four sections titled: *Rhythms*, *Pavane*, *Rigadoon*, and *Finale*. It holds the interest well, and shows great originality. The *Roger-Ducasse Pastorale*, his only published organ work, is a thing of fragile beauty, an exquisite tone painting, nicely realized by Edward Linzel. The reproduction of both discs is of unusual power and clarity; hi fi fans as well as organ fanciers should investigate these, particularly the Linzel disc. S.

Bach Organ Works. Anton Heiller, playing the organ of the Reformed Church of Thalwil, Switzerland. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3132) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Allabreve in D*; *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*; *Prelude and Fugue in D*; *Prelude and Fugue in E*; *Prelude and Fugue in A minor*.

Anton Heiller is a name familiar to most who have read these pages, for he is responsible for many works issued by the Haydn Society, having conducted a number of Haydn symphonies and concertos. This young man (born 1923) is also an organist of the first rank, as is immediately apparent from this disc. He is of the persuasion that speed

does not in itself make a good Bach performance. Heiller selects tempos that preserve clarity and build strength; he then plays with steadiness and vigor. He likes Bach and is inspired by the music, but does not allow his imagination to wreck the architecture of the music. This is magnificent Bach playing. We should not fail to mention the clean, crisp technique of this great artist.

Heiller is fortunate—and so are we—in having as a recording instrument the organ built in 1946 by Th. Kun Inc. for the Reformed Church of Thalwil, Switzerland. It is said to combine the best features of baroque and modern organ building, and it gives us extreme pleasure to report that the worst features of baroque-ism are happily absent. The organ has gravity and weight with admirable clarity; it has brightness and color, but no squeak and squeal, and it is not a brass band of thin, snarly reeds. It is, indeed, a wonderfully-toned instrument of which there should be many more, particularly in the paths of men with microphones.

Comment on the music played is hardly necessary, except to say that it is a superbly chosen selection of the master's great organ works. The important thing is that Heiller plays them so well, on such a fine instrument, all of which is recorded with exceptional skill. A disc recommended without reservation.

S.

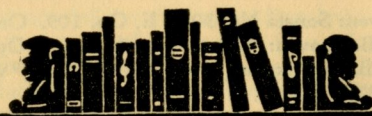
Concert Favorites for Organ (Vol. 2). Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3127) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Prince Igor*—Polovtsian Dances (Borodin); *Quartet*, Op. 11—Andante Cantabile (Tchaikovsky); *Peer Gynt*—Death of Ase (Grieg); *Toward Evening* (Ellsasser); *Midsummer Night's Dream*—Nocturne (Mendelssohn).

Leroy Anderson Favorites. Richard Ellsasser, playing the Baldwin Electronic Organ. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3174) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Sleigh Ride*; *Blue Tango*; *Syncopated Clock*; *Plink, Plank, Plunk*; *Waltzing Cat*; *Serenata*; *Belle of the Ball*; *Fiddle Faddle*; *Bugler's Holiday*; *Promenade*; *Phantom Regiment*; *Jazz Pizzicato*.

Richard Ellsasser continues on his merry way, providing popular versions of concert favorites transcribed for organ; his many discs have been eminently successful. The popular Leroy Anderson numbers almost seem written for the electronic organ; because of its faster action and variety of effects, Mr. Ellsasser brings to each a new freshness which should prove most acceptable to his followers.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

The Fabulous Phonograph. By Roland Gelatt. 320 pp. Illustrated. J. B. Lippincott Company (Philadelphia and New York). Price \$4.95.

Those of us who have been waiting for years for someone to write a history of the phonograph and of records (Mr. Gelatt's book covers both) will be highly pleased with *The Fabulous Phonograph*. Although this interesting volume traces the phonograph "from tin foil to high fidelity," it is not a technical book. It is for those persons who are deeply interested in recordings and would like to know something of how they and the instrument for playing them were developed. Mr. Gelatt tells us this in a fascinating and lively style. A genuine record collector will, in all probability, not put this book down until he has finished, once he has started it; and because of its elaborate chronology and index he will wish to keep it at hand for reference.

When we picked up *The Fabulous Phonograph*, all we knew about Roland Gelatt was that he was a young music critic whose articles we had noticed during the last few years in the *Saturday Review* and *High Fidelity* magazines. So far as we were concerned, he had two strikes against him before we turned to page one. We were very sure that this young fellow was going to cover the first seventy years of the life of the phonograph in a few shortly clipped chapters and then dwell at length on LP's, high fidelity equipment and tape recordings—subjects of which he had personal knowledge—giving a greatly distorted picture to those of us who, as little children, were introduced to recordings by Mr. Edison's very early model phonograph, with its motor driven by cumbersome storage batteries. We, who have been in almost daily contact with phonographs and records since before World War I and who

have been reviewing recordings each month for over a quarter of a century, know that the phonograph didn't suddenly jump out of a hat at the advent of LP's. However, our fears were certainly unfounded. Mr. Gelatt, through very careful research, has delved into each step in the development of his subject from the invention of the phonograph in 1877 to the reduction in the price of LP's in 1955. Each step is nicely brought out in true perspective. Much more could have been written on this subject; but all things must have a beginning, and we, to whom recorded music means so much, are truly thankful to Mr. Gelatt for blazing the trail.

We thought that we knew a great deal about the history of recorded music. But we did not know, until we read *The Fabulous Phonograph*, that it was the Russians who in 1901 conceived the idea of indicating celebrity records by placing Red Labels on them (good old Uncle Joe, wherever he is, will be comforted to know this—*Pravda* please copy); that the first Victor Red Seal recording to be made in America (previously all Red Seals were pressed from imported masters) was made on 30 April 1903 at a studio in Carnegie Hall by an Australian contralto named Ada Crossley—Miss Crossley's records soon disappeared from the catalog and her fame in America rests on the fact that she was this country's first Red Seal artist; that three great firsts in the development of recordings came from Odeon: the first double-faced disc in 1904 from German Odeon, the first large-scale orchestral recording (Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*) on four double-faced discs in an album issued in 1909 by Odeon's English branch, and the first complete recording of a symphony in 1913 (Beethoven's *Fifth*) from Odeon in Germany.

Mr. Gelatt's book is chock-full of just such

information. We found it mighty interesting, and we do not hesitate to recommend *The Fabulous Phonograph* to our readers.

* * *

The most exciting news of the month for record collectors is described in detail in the little pamphlet which accompanies this issue of **THE NEW RECORDS**: the news of Columbia's new LP Record Club.

The story behind the Club, briefly, is this: Columbia has observed the growth of various record clubs with no little alarm. These clubs, largely devoted to classical records, have been tremendously successful—and this with few name artists and often using recording techniques of questionable fidelity. Columbia feels that, if a record club can succeed on such a basis, then a club offering records with name artists in four categories, processed and pressed by a known leader in the industry, should be even more successful. Thus, the Columbia LP Record Club was established.

You must join the club through a Columbia record dealer. To induce new members to join, Columbia gives them their choice of a free bonus record just for sending in their applications. Thereafter, two LP's from each of the following four categories will be made available to Club members each month: Classical, Listening and Dancing, Broadway Shows and Movies, and Jazz. These will be described in detail in the monthly Club Magazine which members will receive; as a member, you may choose any, all, or none of these eight records, but for every two LP's you buy, you will receive a limited edition "bonus" LP disc, not available in the stores. Your only obligation, after joining, is to purchase four LP's during the ensuing twelve months; after you have purchased four you may resign, if you wish.

Since **THE NEW RECORDS** carries no advertising, it must be obvious to readers that we cannot survive without the support both of our readers and of the various record manufacturers; and we are exceedingly proud of the fact that this little bulletin has on its mailing list the names of a large majority of the important record collectors in the United States. It would not hurt us one bit if we could demonstrate this to Columbia; and we therefore ask this favor

of you: if you feel disposed to join the Columbia LP Record Club, will you please do so by completing the application on the last page of the enclosed pamphlet and mail it back to us? It will cost you no more this way, and the number of subscriptions we turn over to Columbia will be a measure of the regard American record collectors have for our little bulletin.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see **TNR** Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning September, 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 65.
Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8325) \$4.98.

We have more than once had occasion to compliment Steinberg on some very fine performances (see

TNR July '55), and this disc is no exception. There are some other excellent versions of the Tchaikovsky *Fifth* in the LP catalogs: Ormandy (*C-ML-4400), Stokowski (*V-LM-1780), Dorati (*ME-MG-50008), to name three. Stokowski's is mannered to such an extent that a conductor of lesser stature would fail to please us at all; but his version remains a constant seller and must be accounted as being exciting. We much prefer the conductor to play Tchaikovsky as it was written; and, if you agree, you will find Steinberg to be wholly acceptable—outstanding, if you please. Capitol's FDS reproduction, as has been previously noted, is as fine as you'll get these days, although Ormandy's, Stokowski's and Dorati's is equally fine. We have both Ormandy and Dorati in our library, and we'll not change at this time; but certainly if you choose one of the four mentioned, you will have the best *Fifth* for you.

Yardumian: Armenian Suite. And **Yardumian: Desolate City.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. One side, and **Yardumian: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.** Anshel Brusilow (violin) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. And **Yardumian: Psalm No. 130.** Howell Zulick (tenor) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4991) \$4.98.

Hill: Prelude for Orchestra. And **Lopatnikoff: Concertino for Orchestra, Op. 30.** Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. One side, and **Dallapiccola: Tartiniana for Violin and Orchestra.** Ruth Posselt (violin) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4996) \$4.98.

Richard Yardumian, a native Philadelphian now living at Bryn Athyn, Pa., has found a champion for his works in Eugene Ormandy. Ormandy programmed his music during the recent European tour of the Philadelphia Orchestra and has used it extensively in Philadelphia. The *Armenian Suite* is comprised of seven short sections, nicely contrasted, and titled Introduction, Song, Lullaby, Dance No. 1, Interlude, Dance No. 2 and Interlude. It is built largely on folk songs, all of which are genuinely Armenian. The music is pleasant to hear despite the fact that it is original and unusually well wrought. It is therefore a pleasure to recommend it as American music of which we may be proud. *Desolate City* is a short, rather introspective tone poem, also melodically pleasant.

Yardumian's *Concerto for Violin*, completed in 1949, is built according to the dictates of a twelve-tone cycle of thirds, a medium the composer believes is a new concept of twelve-tone composition. It has a more modern tinge than the two works mentioned above; nevertheless Yardumian has managed to refine much of the acid out of the music and proves to have a regard for melodic appeal, regardless of the

medium he chooses. Anshel Brusilow has mastered the difficulties of the work well and plays it with a driving conviction. Yardumian, piano teacher and church choir director, is heard on this disc in still another idiom with his *Psalm 130*, with Howell Zulick, a Philadelphia tenor of uncommon gifts, as soloist. With exceptional diction, Zulick voices a literal translation of the Psalm against an orchestral background of dramatic eloquence. This is a moving and completely successful realization of the text. The perfection of the Philadelphia Orchestra is appreciated doubly in new and unfamiliar music. Reproduction is superb.

The distinguished American musician and teacher, Edward Burlingame Hill, wrote his *Prelude for Orchestra* in Sarasota, Florida early in 1953. It was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation on the composer's eightieth birthday. It is, though not programmatic, an evocative work of conventional design and innate beauty. Lopatnikoff's *Concertino* (1944) is in three short movements and is music which falls easily on the ear while being entirely original. Dallapiccola's *Tartiniana* takes four movements from Tartini sonatas and works them over in a modern manner. It is a study in what can be done in redecorating old music in a modern manner. A man of Dallapiccola's skill would not likely fail in this task, and he indeed produces a work that is fascinating. While dissonant, it makes sense from the start, which makes it unusually clever in our books. Leonard Bernstein and the orchestra do remarkably fine work in all the music; Miss Posselt is excellent in the difficult *Tartiniana*, and reproduction is of the superior variety in this admirable disc of contemporary music. S.

R. Strauss: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Willem Mengelberg. One side, and **R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66032) \$4.98.

Elgar: Enigma Variations, Op. 36. One side, and **Elgar: Cockaigne Overture, Op. 40.** And **Elgar: Serenade in E minor, Op. 20.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5031) \$4.98.

Stravinsky: Symphony No. 1 in E-flat, Op. 1. Vienna Orchestral Society conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN UN-1006) \$3.98.

The Telefunken disc is a curious affair; the same material was previously issued (in 1950) by Capitol, who then had rights to Telefunken masters. At that time we did not go all out for the disc. While the performances must be counted among the more competent ones committed to discs, the orchestras are not up to their usual precision in either work. As for reproduction, each of these is clearly of a bygone vintage. The value of these performances is purely

for those few who wish Mengelberg's interpretation—those who want Krauss doing Till can have him in better form and with better recording on London. This disc belongs on a special collector's series; it is unfair to purvey it as current hi-fi merchandise.

Beecham's Elgar concert is typical of the lovable old conductor, with a whimsical mellowness and warmth that cannot fail to reach those who enjoy Elgar's romantic writings. Toscanini has more fire and wallop in sections of the *Enigma*, Sargent has a bit more rhetoric here and there, but the composite picture of these little vignettes is shaped with unique skill by the goateed old gent who must bow to none as a conductor *par excellence*. There is a mellowness here that is just right. We like his *Enigma* for the sincerity and style and for the justness of the individual portraits. The *Serenade* and the *Cockaigne* are just right in approach and in realization. Reproduction is satisfactory.

The surprise in this trio of discs is the Stravinsky. We would like to take all those who read this bulletin and get them in a hall (before they read this review). After playing the Stravinsky *Symphony No. 1* without announcement or introduction we would like to take a poll as to what composer the audience thought they had heard. We wager that not half of one percent, if any at all, would ever guess Stravinsky. Why? Because this could pass for the work of any romantic composer about the turn of the century. This is a delight to hear for those who like conventional music. It has not become a repertoire staple because it is a youthful exercise of familiar formula; but if we enjoy the early masters for their perfection, so can we enjoy the romantic masters for their pleasant offerings. Performance here is excellent, and the reproduction clear and of nice timbre, with good surfaces. This is the first recording ever made of the work. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 44 in E minor ("Trauersymphonie"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 85 in B-flat** ("La Reine"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Sacher. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3059) \$3.98.

Haydn: Symphony No. 92 in G ("Oxford"). Royal Orchestra of Copenhagen conducted by Nikolai Malko. One side, and **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72a**. And **Beethoven: Coriolan Overture, Op. 62**. And **Beethoven: Prometheus Overture, Op. 43**. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Nikolai Malko. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1087) \$2.98.

We had begun to think that a long afternoon of reviewing in the hot weather was making us cranky and hard to please, for we could not generate any enthusiasm for the Sacher disc; "routine" was the kindest thing we could think of. But then we placed the Malko reading of Haydn's "Oxford" Symphony on our turntable, wiped the perspiration from our fevered brow, and sat back, entranced. There are not

very many lemons in the RCA Victor "Bluebird" series, and this disc holds up the standard very well. The Epic record might be subtitled "Haydn Overwrought," while the Bluebird could be dubbed "Haydn Overblown." We much prefer the latter treatment. The Beethoven overtures are nicely performed.

Svendsen: Norwegian Rhapsody No. 2, Op. 19. And **Svendsen: Norwegian Rhapsody No. 3, Op. 21**. Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Oivin Fjeldstad One-half side, and **Svendsen: Symphony No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 15**. Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Odd Gruner-Hegge. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-90004) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

Lumbye: Dances from Tivoli. Tivoli Concert Hall Orchestra conducted by Tippe Lumbye. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-90000) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

Music of Modern Norway (Vol. 4). Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Odd Gruner-Hegge. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-90002) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Concert Overture, Op. 2* (Braein); (2) *Edda Songs* (Olsen) (with Eva Prytz, soprano); *Partita Sinfonica* (Jensen); *Pan, Op. 22* (Mohan- sen); *Olav Liljekrans* — excerpts (Eggen) (with Bjarne Buntz, tenor).

Mercury seems to be back on its Scandinavian kick, having brought us a good deal of music from that section of the world (e.g., see TNR Mar. '54). Three works of Johan Svendsen (1840-1911) are indeed ingratiatingly performed; the two *Norwegian Rhapsodies* are songful and most pleasant to hear, but the major work, of course, is the *Second Symphony*. The *Second* is quite satisfying; it is, as one would expect, Norwegian in flavor, progressing logically so that, while one is not surprised at the next theme, one keeps listening to see how it will come out. The very fine training of the Oslo Philharmonic is very much in evidence. . . . The *Tivoli Dances* are all from "The Waltz King of the North," Hans Christian Lumbye; they are pleasing bits of fluff, spiritedly conducted by the composer's grandson. If you like Concerts in the Park with a Danish flavor, here is one in spades. . . . From a Concert in the Park, we come to a potpourri of Norwegian items. Edward Braein (1924-) gives us a rather ordinary *Concert Overture* which the ebullient playing of the Oslo Orchestra cannot improve. Mercury's notes are not the most lucid in the world, but we gather that the *Edda Songs* are about a god's love for an earthly woman and its fulfillment. Ludvig Jensen's four-part work is very good; it reminds one of Brahms and Tchaikovsky with a breath of Norway running through it. *Pan*, by David Johansen, is a tone poem depicting Pan's troubled mind in choosing between

the joys of a single man alone in nature's realm and the pleasures of belonging to the world of people in general and of women in particular. The jacket notes do not tell us which he chose; but the music is impassioned—and mournful. The excerpts from Eggen's opera, *Olav Liljekrans*, depict the scene where Olav must confront the mountain girl, Alfchild, whom he truly loves, with his intended bride, Ingeborg, selected for him by his mother to improve the battered family fortunes. Apparently, up until this minute, Olav had led Alfchild on, making her believe she was his betrothed. This third disc has its moments, but it's trying to listen to so much variety at once. The first two discs are well worth investigating, however.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugene Mravinsky. 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-302) \$2.98.

Glazounov: Symphony No. 6 in C minor, Op. 58. State Radio Orchestra of USSR conducted by N. Golovanov. One and one-half sides, and **Prokofiev: (2) Waltzes.** State Radio Orchestra of USSR conducted by S. Samosud. 1-12" disc (*KINGSWAY KL-291) \$2.98.

Kingsway started from almost nothing a few months ago and has issued some surprisingly fine LP's in its small catalog. Although we generally take a dim view of Russian tapes, these two are considerably better than most you'll hear—very good, in fact. A little thin in heavily orchestrated spots, otherwise the reproduction is quite acceptable. Mravinsky erases no memories of Ormandy in his reading of the "Pathétique," but for \$2.98 (instead of \$4.98) you could do a lot worse.

The Kingsway recording of Glazounov's *Sixth Symphony* is the only one listed in the LP catalog at present. We don't recall ever having heard it before. Glazounov stands, with Rimsky-Korskov, at the head of a Russian school of masters of orchestration, and if you like, for example, Glazounov's *Raymonda* ballet music, you will thoroughly enjoy the *Sixth Symphony*. Comrade Golovanov seems not afraid to keep his comrade musicians moving right along, sustaining interest. Prokofiev's two *Waltzes* make excellent fillers for side two, and Kingsway's reproduction is quite OK. Both discs offer a lot of music for the money.

CONCERTO



Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23. Gina Bachauer (piano) and the New London Orchestra conducted by Alec Sherman. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1890) \$3.98.

The present performance must be ranked with the several best available on LP. We would not give it a

clear "better than any of the others" rating, but it is so excellent in many ways that it turns out to be the equal of any of them. This is easily the best work we ever heard from Gina Bachauer. She and her husband, permanent conductor of the New London Orchestra, give a most sensitive reading of Tchaikovsky's familiar masterpiece. They are most poetic and concerned with producing beauty rather than noise; their's is a traditional approach with no desire to develop original angles. Miss Bachauer is equal to all the technical demands of the work and plays with ease at all times. The reproduction is good, with a rather dark quality and no metallic piano tone.

For those who may not yet have acquired this work, the present disc can be recommended as the best buy without going through several others. If you prefer to compare a few, the ones to consider would be Anda, Cherkassky, Rubinstein, and possibly one or two others whose names are familiar to you. The exception among familiar names is the Horowitz recording, which is a travesty on the work (although it was a best seller in 78 rpm days and is thrilling in its brutal and rather vulgar way). Cherkassky has a unique interpretation which found these columns in a minority opinion that it is good; however, we still think it is a beauty. Curzon has a fine performance, too, with reproduction that has held up well.

The notes accompanying the Bachauer disc quote from a review appearing in the *Boston Evening Transcript* of the first performance by Hans von Bülow, October 25, 1875: "The elaborate work is, in general, as difficult for popular apprehension as the name of the composer. . . . There are long stretches of what seems, on the first hearing at least, formless void. . . ." Think of that the next time you don't get the hang of a modern work; even an erudite critic did not dig the Tchaikovsky *Concerto* on first hearing!

S.

Vivaldi: Le Quattro Stagioni (from "Il Cimento dell' Armonia e dell' Inventione, Op. 8"). John Corigliano (violin) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Guido Cantelli. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5044) \$4.98.

With Guido Cantelli conducting a number of concerts of the New York Philharmonic these past few years, it is natural to find him on the Columbia label; and it is a pleasure to report that his initial release for that company is an excellent disc in every respect. The present Schwann catalog lists four other versions of Vivaldi's *Seasons*, one of which we have not yet heard. We would rather doubt that any performance or any reproduction among the other versions will top the present disc. The reproduction has an unusual depth and richness about it that gives a texture most appropriate to the music. It is not easy to put in words, but it surely sounds wonderful! We thoroughly enjoyed this disc and recom-

mend it highly to those who like music of the early masters.

Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* are, in a sense, program music. Vivaldi provided four accompanying sonnets which explain and accompany the music. Supposedly by an anonymous author, it is the educated guess of most critics that Vivaldi himself penned them to suit his purpose. The lines of the sonnet are set forth in the music at certain intervals. The jacket notes give an exact timing, as well as mentioning the bar number, for the lines of the sonnet. Thus, it is interesting to follow the music and hear how Vivaldi, in 1720, interpreted in music such phrases as "The sky becomes overcast and thunder and lightning follow," "Then sing the turtle dove and the finch," "Teeth chattering with the icy cold," and other such colorful examples. The greatness of the music is proved by the fact that you can sit back and listen to it without benefit of notes and program and get up, convinced you heard the greatest of abstract music. Vivaldi was indeed a genius of the first magnitude. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Bloch: (4) String Quartets. Griller String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-23) \$11.94.

Here are magnificent recordings of the four quartets of Ernest Bloch, performed by the leading exponents of Bloch's chamber music today: The Griller Quartet. The *First Quartet* was composed in 1916 and dedicated to the then popular Flonzaley Quartet. It has traces of the mood of *Schelomo* in it—a passionate work that expresses the composer's view of the world at the time.

The second quartet was written in 1945—29 years after the first—and was dedicated to Alex. Cohen, Birmingham violinist and translator of French verse. It is more "modern" and less "Jewish," one will observe, although all of Bloch's music seems to be infused with the spirit of Judaism. Less easy to like than the first, it is more in the quartet form and depends less on trick sonorities for appeal.

Quartet No. 3 was composed in 1952 and dedicated to the Griller Quartet. This is an overpowering work from the first bar; it would seem to have been written by a much younger man; it bubbles. It is short (just one side of a disc); and, like a successful party, we left it wanting more.

Quartet No. 4, another short work, was written in 1953 and dedicated to Ernest Chapman, who wrote most of the very fine notes that are printed on the two covers of this album. It found the composer in a poetic vein, and it came as something of a let-down, immediately following the *Third Quartet*. Taken by itself (and we wouldn't recommend playing all four at a sitting), it is lyrical and contains much musical worth.

The very excellent Griller Quartet has performed a

service to the collectors of modern chamber music. We hope very much that some of the more adventuresome collectors of Haydn and Mozart will investigate this album, for here is some truly wonderful music by one of the very great chamber music composers of our day. The records, by the way, are in manual sequence, probably indicating that they are available separately: *L-LL-1125 contains *Quartet No. 1*; *L-LL-1126, *Quartet No. 2*; and *L-LL-1127, *Quartets Nos. 3 & 4*. J.

CHORAL



Groven: Ballad for Chorus and Orchestra. Oslo University Choral Society and Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hugo Kramm. One side, and **EGGE: Concerto No. 2.** Robert Riefling (piano) with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Oiven Fjeldstad. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-90003) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

Eivind Groven (1901-) and Klaus Egge (1906-) are two of Norway's younger composers who, like most Norwegians since Grieg, find most of their stimuli in their native folk music. They are sound craftsmen whose work is not dissonant, not hackneyed; if it is not great music, it is surely of uncommon interest.

The story of Groven's *Ballad* is not uncommon, being that of a farm girl who, feeling restless while her lover is at war, takes up with a mountain giant, presents him with a child, is apparently spurned (the English translation is not clear here) but cannot forget her wonderful experiences with the giant. The well-trained chorus, under Thomas Beck, sings with gusto; the reproduction is clear enough, but with no libretto we must confess that Norwegian is not one of our strong points. Hugo Kramm keeps things moving right along and has evidently infused the proper spirit into his forces; the result is a work of unity and excitement well worth the investigation of the more adventurous collector. Mercury's reproduction leaves absolutely nothing to be desired.

The *Second Piano Concerto* of Klaus Egge dates from 1944, is another interesting work, and we are told that it is one of his most representative compositions. It is subtitled "Symphonic Variations and Fugue on a Norwegian Folk Song," which is a most accurate description, for it doesn't sound much like the piano concertos one is accustomed to. The piano wanders in and out of the orchestra, as though at battle with it, with now one winning, now the other. It is difficult to describe to one who has never heard it; it sounds like a piece of Debussy piano music with orchestral accompaniment—dreamy, romantic, much orchestral color, more or less ethereal. Robert Riefling seems to understand what the work is about; and the Oslo Philharmonic, as demonstrated in both the Groven and the Egge works, is an instru-

ment of great talent. Once again, Mercury's reproduction brings the work to us in its true perspective, this time at considerably lower volume than in the Groven *Ballad*: clear, wide range, brilliant and full. J.

Lully: Miserere. (Sung in Latin). Soloists, St. Anthony Singers and l'Ensemble orchestral de l'Oiseau-lyre conducted by Anthony Lewis. 1-10" disc (*OL-DL-53003) \$2.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc, see under OPERA.

OPERA



Operatic Recital. Aureliano Pertile (tenor). 1-12" disc (*ETERNA-710) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Pagliacci*—Un grand spettacolo & Un tal gioca, credetemi; *Adriana Lecouvreur*—La dolcissima effigie & L'anima ho stanca; *Mefistofele*—Giunto sul passo; *Il Trovatore*—Di quella pira; *Madama Butterfly*—Duet (Act II) (with Fregosi); *Manon Lescaut*—No! Pazzo son! Guardate & Ah, Manon, mi tradisce; *Turandot*—Non piangiere, Liu; *Lohengrin*—Da voi lontan; *Vieni* (Denza).

Operatic Recital. Mattia Battistini (baritone). 1-12" disc (*ETERNA-709) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$4.98.

CONTENTS—*Otello*—Era la notte; *L'Africaine*—Quando amor m'accende & Averla tanto amata; *Trovatore*—Mira, d'acerbe lagrime (with Barbieri); *Tannhäuser*—Allor che tu colli' estro; *Damnation of Faust*—Su queste rose; *Hamlet*—Come il romito fior; *Amour, amour* (Tosti); *Ideale* (Tosti); *La Serenata* (Tosti).

Operatic Recital. Giuseppe Anselmi (tenor). 1-12" disc (*ETERNA-711) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Luisa Miller*—Ah fede negar potessi & Quando le sere al placido; *Mefistofele*—Dai campi dai prati & Giunto sul passo; *La Favorita*—Una vergine un angiol di dio & Spirto gentil; *Manon*—Il sogno; *Fedora*—Amor ti vieta; *Marcella*—O mia marcella; *Serse*—Va godendo vezzoso e bello; *Manru*—Come al sol cocente.

Very often recordings of singers of a bygone age only serve to point out the fact that there were mediocre artists then as now; but every once in a while one comes across an "oldie" who really had something on the ball. Such a singer was Giuseppe Anselmi; but first let us get the other two, the better known singers, out of the way. Aureliano Pertile was, and probably still is, greatly admired by many people. This reviewer could not be numbered among his admirers, however, because Pertile always sounded harsh and strained and was given to sobbing and

fake or exaggerated emotionalism. Nevertheless, he was a great favorite with no less a musician than Arturo Toscanini—so take your choice. Mattia Battistini was, of course, the Prince of baritones, the *Gloria d'Italia*. All that needs to be said that these arias and songs show him at his finest. A wonderful disc.

Now for Guiseppe Anselmi. He proves to be a first class lyrico-dramatic tenor—in the same class, both vocally and artistically, with Martinelli and the more recent Guiseppe di Stefano—in short, he was an artist and musician as well as a tenor. Just for the record, Anselmi was born in 1876 and died in 1929. He had retired from the operatic stage in 1916 but made his final appearance before the public as he had made his first, as a violinist! He gave his last public concert in Rapallo in 1926. In addition to this musical activity, Anselmi also composed a number of songs. All this training is obvious in his singing, which is marked by taste and authority. Outstanding is the only word for his singing of *Quando le sere al placido*, *Amor ti vieta* and *Spirto gentil*, while the Xerxes excerpt must be heard to be believed. This is certainly a record for every lover of fine singing. The sound is amazingly good, too, considering that the originals date from 1906. W.

"Critic's Choice." Favorite recordings of Paul Hume, Music Editor, *The Washington Post-Times Herald*. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1158) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Rachmaninoff: *O Cease Thy Singing*, *Maiden Fair*, Op. 4, No. 4 (McCormack, Kreisler, Schneider); Mozart: *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*—Marten aller Arten (Perras); Humperdinck: *Weihnachten* (Schumann-Heink); Bach: *St. Matthew Passion*—Aus Liebe will mein Heiland sterben (Schumann); Barber: *Dover Beach* (Barber); Schubert: *Der Erlkönig*, Op. 1 (Kipnis); Wylie-Thompson: *Velvet Shoes* (Frijsh); Poulenc: "C" (Bernac, Poulenc); Alfano: *Resurrection*—Dieu de Grace (Garden); Ponchielli: *La Gioconda*—Suicidio! (Raisa); Verdi: *Falstaff*—Sul fil d'un soffio etesio (dal Monte); Gretchaninoff: *Glory to Thee, O Lord* (Twofold Litany) (Chaliapin).

This is the second "Critic's Choice" record RCA Victor has issued and, as was the case with its predecessor (TNR Apr. '53) your reviewer can find quite a bit to take issue with: but presumably, that is why such records are released in the first place!

To begin with, Mr. Hume has selected Alexander Kipnis' mangled version of Schubert's great *Erlkönig*, and this is inclined to make the writer suspect all his other choices. How anyone who professes to know and love *lieder* (or any singing for that matter) can abide Kipnis' grotesque dramatics and execrable German is beyond this writer. The selection of Margherita Perras' recording of *Marten aller Arten* is good, except for the fact that it is very drastically cut—there are other and better Perras recordings. Schumann-Heink's *Weihnachten* and Mary Garden's

Résurrection aria also seem wilfully odd choices to your servant.

It is fine to have Barber's *Dover Beach* and the Raisa and Chaliapin discs; the last, in particular, has been in great demand over the last few years. Other items in the collection are the sort that one can take or leave—obviously Mr. Hume and the writer have very different tastes.

Speaking as objectively as possible, then, all the singing is first class with the exception of Kipnis; the interpretations are also good—there are no bad records here (again with the notable exception of the *Erlkönig*)—it's just that there were much greater possibilities. When one thinks of the wonderful and as yet untouched buried treasure in Victor's vaults W.

Rameau: Hippolyte et Aricie (excerpts). (Sung in French). Soloists, chorus and orchestra conducted by Roger Désormière. 1-12" disc (*OL-50034) \$4.98.

Lully: Miserere. (Sung in Latin). Margaret Ritchie, Elsie Morison (sopranos), Alfred Deller (counter tenor), William Herbert, Richard Lewis (tenors), Bruce Boyce (baritone), the St. Anthony Singers and l'Ensemble orchestral de l'Oiseau-lyre conducted by Anthony Lewis. 1-10" disc (*OL-DL-53003) \$2.98.

Hippolyte et Aricie, Rameau's first full scale dramatic work, had its premiere performance on 1 October 1733. Rameau had been notorious for his high powered theories on music and opera, and it was in this work that he was able to apply them to a dramatic composition. The piece was a sensation when it was first performed and divided Paris into two camps—those favoring the older music of Lully and those "modernists" who admired Rameau's "new" harmonies, modulations and rhythms. Today, *Hippolyte et Aricie* seems almost archaic, dull—it is difficult to understand, from this performance in all events, why all the excitement.

The present recording, then, is a collection of excerpts, most of them being from the fourth act. The soloists are better than average, but the recorded sound is poor; it is full of rattles, buzzes and other extra-musical sounds. This state of affairs adds nothing to the listener's enjoyment; rather the opposite. It would be best to hear this one first, in all events.

The Lully *Miserere* is another work of more historical than musical value—as it is presented here, anyway. Most early French music, with the notable exception of Marc-Antoine Charpentier, is very apt to prove dull and dry. This setting of the 50th Psalm is scholarly but without any inner light. No real feeling is expressed in the music; as a consequence, even such superior artists as Margaret Ritchie, William Herbert, Alfred Deller and Bruce Boyce are unable to arouse any enthusiasm for the score. It just flows on until the end, whereupon it stops. The

sound is only fair here, too. There are notes in both instances but no texts. W.

Famous Records of the Past (Vol. 1). Voices of "The Golden Age." 1-10" disc (*FRP-1) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Otello*—Era la notte (Battistini); *Roberto le Diable*—Cavatina (Escalais); *Traviata*—Sembre libera (Lilli Lehmann); *Tosca*—Recondita armonia (Schipa); *Falstaff*—Quand'ero paggio (De Luca); *Siberia*—T'Incontra per via (Bassi); *Rigoletto*—La donna e mobile (McCormack); *Manon*—Helas! L'oiseau qui fuit (Arnoldson); *Lucrezia Borgia*—Brindisi (Butt); *Ballo in Maschera*—Saper vorreste (Kurz); *Otello*—Esultate & Ora e per sempre addio (O'Sullivan); *Gianni Schicchi*—O mio babbino caro (Muzio).

Famous Records of the Past (Vol. 2). Voices of "The Golden Age." 1-10" disc (*FRP-2) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Favorita*—Leonora viens (Renaud); *Bohème*—Che gelida manina (Martinelli); *Trovatore*—Tacea la notte (Ponselle); *Die Freischütz*—Viva bacco. (Didur); *Carmen*—Toreador Song (Campari); *Faust*—Salut demeure (Slezak); *Huguenots*—Piff, Paff (Mardones); *Hunyadi Laszlo*—Ah rebequesa (Nordica).

Famous Records of the Past (Vol. 3). Voices of "The Golden Age." 1-10" disc (*FRP-3) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Trovatore*—Di quella pira (Perile); *Walküre*—Ho yo to ho (Fremstad); *Philemon et Baucis*—Couplets of Vulcan (Belhomme); *Carmen*—En vain pour eviter (Bressler-Gianoli); *Don Giovanni*—Brindisi (Scotti); *Huguenots*—Nobil dame (Ancona); *Sonnambula*—Ah non giunge (Tetrazini); *Favorita*—A tanto amor (Sammarco); *Huguenots*—Qui sotto il ciel (Caruso); *Huguenots*—Piff, paff (Plançon); *Vespri Siciliani*—Bolero (Raisa); *Trovatore*—Il balen (Stracciari).

Three extremely interesting historical discs, collections of old pre-electrical 78 rpm records, are issued this month by Famous Records of the Past. Here is a notable group of singers: some twenty-eight artists are included, and they are represented by recordings and performances that have become almost legendary. Here is an early (pre-Victor?) Caruso disc with a spoken introduction, McCormack singing *La donna è mobile*, and a very early (again, pre-Victor?) Martinelli that demonstrates the wonderfully youthful voice and also some very immature phrasing in the delivery of *Che gelida manina*. One could go on enumerating the glories of these three records—Slezak's *Salut demeure* is a wonderful performance; Plançon's *Piff, paff* from "Les Huguenots" is the epitome of his art, with the glorious voice and the almost off-hand delivery. There is also Antonio Scotti taking liberties with and "improving" on Mozart's *Don Giovanni* ((*Finch-han dal vino*), and Dame Clara Butt singing the *Brindisi* from "Lucrezia Borgia" and sounding astonishingly like Anna Russell at times.

Among the lesser known, but equally fine artists are Leon Escalais (tenor) who sings an impressive Meyerbeer excerpt; Selma Kurz vocalizing incomparably in *Saper voreste*; and Mario Ancona singing, very suavely, a seldom heard aria from *Les Huguenots*.

As might be expected, the sound is, except in one case, acoustical but the transfer has been made very successfully. These three records are worth every cent of their modest price. W.

Wagner: Lohengrin—(2) choruses. One side, and **Wagner: Der fliegende Holländer**—(2) choruses. Chorus and Orchestra of the Städtische Oper (Berlin) conducted by Hans Georg Otto. 1-10" disc (*T-TM-68042) \$2.98.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Closing scene (excerpts). Anton Dermota (tenor), Paul Schoeffler (baritone), the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9080) \$2.98.

To those who feel that the choral writing of Wagner is as compelling as anything in operatic music we suggest the little Telefunken disc listed above; we could have done without the Bridal Chorus from *Lohengrin*, but the Procession to the Minister from that opera and the Sailors' Chorus and Spinning Chorus from *The Flying Dutchman* come off very well, indeed. And, although we have criticized the reproduction of many Telenfunkens, this one is more than satisfactory.

London has lifted some excerpts from the Finale of its complete recording of *Die Meistersinger* (TNR Mar. '52) for this little 10-inch disc. As the complete performance was very highly praised by "W" at the time, no comment is necessary here.

Orff: Antigona (Scenes IV & V). (Sung in German). Christel Goltz (soprano), Hilde Roessler-Majdan (alto), Hermann Uhde (baritone), Josef Greindl (bass), members of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and the Vienna State Opera Chorus conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5038) \$5.95.

Among contemporary musicians and composers Carl Orff stands alone—both as to methods and treatment of material and, despite the strangeness of his scores to ears accustomed to more traditional music, as to his obvious sincerity and seriousness. None of his music seem to have been written merely to astonish (although it does); neither is there any striving after effect (although the effects are there, too).

These two scenes from *Antigona* are the third composition of Orff's to reach LP records. The first, *Carmina Burana*, was enthusiastically received and the second, *Catulli Carmina*, with rather some reservations. This reviewer found it rough going all the way with the present disc. There can be no doubt

that Orff has achieved his purpose, but whether one likes his purpose or ideas is quite another matter. In this type of "opera," as Charles Burr's excellent notes point out, there is "no melody, no aria, no song as such. There is, instead, a kind of telegraphic, urgent and insistent declamation comparable only to the non-stop sentences of the very young or the chirping of birds." This all sounds pretty formidable, and it is—you have to have a whole lot of patience and good will towards the new idiom in order for it to begin to make sense. All the musical difficulties are not helped by a libretto based on one of the bloodiest and messiest of the old Greek plays.

The singers (save the mark!) are those who sang it at the Salzburg premiere in 1949, and this recording was made under the personal supervision of the composer; one must assume it to be definitive.

Antigona is for enterprising souls who like not only something new but also something exotic. The average music lover or opera fancier is advised to tread warily—hear it first. Good sound, first class notes and a libretto are added features. W.

Operatic Recital. Cesare Siepi (bass) with the Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9169) \$2.98.

(3) **Arias.** Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-7" disc (ØV-ERA-245) \$1.49.

NOTE: For review of these discs see under VOCAL.

VOCAL



Bach: Cantata No. 51 ("Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 209** ("Non sa che sia dolore"). Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-546) \$4.98.

The Smiling Bach. Vocal and instrumental soloists and orchestras. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1877) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Suite No. 1*—Bourrée I & II (orch.—Reiner); *Well-Tempered Clavier*—Prelude No. 1 (Landowska); *Cantata No. 140*—Zion hört die Wächter singen (Shaw Chorale); *Suite No. 2*—Badinerie & *Cantata No. 147*—Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (orch.—Stokowski); *Suite No. 3*—Air for G String & Gigue (orch.—Reiner); *Cantata No. 41*—Lass uns o höchsten Gott (Farrell & Bach Aria Group); *Well-Tempered Clavier*—Prelude No. 5 (Landowska); *Brandenburg Concerto No. 2*—Allegro assai (orch.—Koussevitzky); *Cantata No. 208*—Sheep May Safely Graze (orch.—Stokowski); *Suite No. 4*—Rejouissance (orch.—Reiner); *Well-Tempered Clavier*—Fugue No. 7 (Landowska); *St. John Passion*—Chorale Finale (Shaw Chorale & orch.).

Bach's *Cantata No. 51* receives here its fourth LP

recording, this time under the auspices of the Bach Guild, and a fine one it is, featuring Teresa Stich-Randall as the soloist. In addition, she is ably supported by trumpeter Helmuth Wobitsch. The fiendishly difficult vocal part is sung with deceptive ease by Miss Stich-Randall, and the performance may be considered a successful one from both an artistic as well as an interpretive point of view. The foregoing comments apply also to the performance of the *Cantata No. 209*, although musically it is not of the same order as "Jauchzet Gott!" Good notes, texts and fine sound are all in evidence.

RCA Victor's idea of collecting *The Smiling Bach* is a happy one indeed. As a Bach sampler it could scarcely be improved on, although Reiner's heavy-handed and wilful *Badinerie* from the *Second Suite* nearly threw your reviewer. Phooie! Outside of this one lapse, however, most of Bach's music is presented in a straightforward manner; even the Stokowski orchestrations of such pieces as *Jesu, joy of man's desiring* and the ever green *Sheep may safely graze* are in the best of taste. Properly used, the disc could really open the whole world of Bach to the sensitive listener who wants to learn. And yet one wonders how much good these helps, these almost sugar coated excerpts, actually will do? How many "converts" will there be? How many will stop looking on Bach only as a fearsome musical giant and will look on him as a human being too? One supposes that if only a few hundred are brought to see the light, as it were, the disc will have achieved its artistic purpose, if not altogether its commercial mission. One does hope, however, that it sells many thousands of copies, for the percentage of conversions will be higher. There are fine notes by Roland Gelatt (see editorial) and the usual excellent RCA Victor sound. W.

Schumann: Dichterliebe, Op. 48. One and one-half sides, and **Schumann: (5) Songs.** Anton Dermota (tenor) accompanied by Hilda Dermota (piano). 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66023) \$4.98.

CONTENTS OF SONGS: *Widmung*, Op. 25, No. 1; *Der Nussbaum*, Op. 25, No. 3; *Mondnacht*, Op. 39, No. 6; *Die Lotosblume*, Op. 25, No. 7; *Schöne Fremde*, Op. 39, No. 6.

Robert Schumann's romantic setting of Heinrich Heine's *Dichterliebe* is a favorite with many people, a point amply attested to by its seven already issued recordings; Herr Dermota's is the eighth. What to say about the eighth recording of anything? Make comparisons? Be snide? Generous? Sarcastic? There are many avenues open. Your humble servant feels, however, that each disc and performance should stand on its own merits (if any); so here goes.

Anton Dermota takes a far too emotional approach to songs that were written sentimentally to begin with, for both Heine and Schumann could be a little on the sticky side. This was a curious trait in Heine, for he had a fine sense of humor—maybe

the sentiment was a sort of psychic safety valve that led him to become a little sloppy, emotionally speaking. Schumann was no slouch at pouring on the treacle, and in the *Dichterliebe*, then, we have two experts turning on all the emotional faucets. When the singer adds to the already supercharged atmosphere of the cycle by adopting overly deliberate tempi, adding "h's" where none exist ("Wenn ich in dienen h'Augen seh'") and then tossing in a sob or two—this writer just evaporated.

The extra songs fare a little better, for there is less wearing of the heart on the sleeve; and Dermota perks up and sings with some spirit and sense of conviction. Had he done the same for the *Dichterliebe*, it would have helped. As it is, this is a recording to be heard before buying. No texts, pretty good sound. W.

French-Canadian Folk Songs. Pierrette Champoux (vocals) accompanied by Samuel Levitan (piano) and Jacques Verdon (violin). 1-12" disc (*ESO-536) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *C'est sur les Bords du Saint-Laurent*; *Le Crapaud*; *Margoton va-t-a l'Iau*; *A la Claire Fontaine*; *La Destinée*, *la Rose au Bois*; *Bonhomme! Bonhomme!*; *Le Prisonnier de la Tour*; *Prendre un Petit Coup*; *Au clair de la Lune*; *Je ne suis pas si Vilaine*; *Qu'il est Doux d'Aimer*; *A la Volette*; *Auprès de ma Blonde*; *Marianne s'en va-t-au Moulin*; *En Roulant ma Boule*; *Alouette*.

Chansons Créoles and Chansons Folkloriques d'Haiti. Andrée Lescot (soprano) with Roger Bourdin and his Ensemble. 1-12" disc (*L-TW-91040) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Choucouné*; *Michieu Bango*; *Li sette, ma chère amie*; *Chère, mo lemmé toi*; *Fais do do*; *Dansé conni conné* (Créole). *Erzulie malade*; *Gros Loa Moin*; *Hymne à Dambala*; *Bouclé noué*; *Lazaoh*; *Invocation à Dambala*; *Marassa e lou*; *M'agué ta royo*; *Erzulie oh*; *Erzulie sa!*

Siqueira: Xango (Brazilian Negro Cantata). One side, and **(8) Brazilian Folk Songs.** Alice Ribeiro (soprano) with orchestra and chorus conducted by José Siqueira. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-465) \$4.98.

CONTENTS OF SONGS: *Mulher Rendeira*; *A Casinha Pequeninha*; *Coco-Penerue*; *Engenho Novo*; *Abaluaie*; *Acalinto*; *Neu Engenho e de Humaita*; *Boi-Bumba*.

NOTE: Just to prove a point we gave these discs for review to one of our seasoned vocal critics, who had previously admitted to us that he did not care for folk music. This indicates that the growing band of folk music collectors are building record libraries of real musical merit. Ed.

When your reviewer was handed these three discs of folk music he groaned inwardly; for, as a general rule, "folk" art of any sort usually gives him the creeps. Imagine, then, his consternation when, on

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 *) indicates 45 rpm.

playing the records, he found them to contain utterly fascinating music, excellently sung and authentically presented.

The French-Canadian collection is a real gem and the prize of the lot. Pierrette Champoux has an expressive and musical voice; a throaty soprano that is ideally suited to her material. She has superb diction and is very natural in her manner, both essentials, incidentally, for successful singing of this type. The music is spritely, tuneful and very French. The recital includes such old favorites as *Alouette* (maybe more familiar as the tune for the Alka-Seltzer commercial), *Au clair de la Lune* (hardly folk music to be sure, but no matter—this writer never heard it sung this well before), *Aupres de ma Blonde* and the children's favorite *Marianne s'en va-t-au Moulin*; and the less familiar ones are just as delightful. Fine sound, French texts only, but a really first-rate disc in every respect.

The next item, the *Chansons Créoles* and *Chansons Folkloriques d'Haiti* are considerably more exotic but still have one foot, as it were, in European culture and so are easy to take—particularly the Créole songs. Mlle. Lescot is a fine young singer who proves to be an equally fine artist—one who is completely at home with her material. The accompaniments by the Roger Bourdin Ensemble add a great deal to the listener's enjoyment. Highly recommended.

The last disc is the most exotic of all—nearly all traces of our European musical heritage have been expunged and the resultant music was, for this listener, a little more difficult of access. Miss Ribiero enters in the spirit of the affair and is reasonably successful. She is not in a class with the other two singers, but her task is more difficult, and she does very well in the main. The sound is good here, and there are informative notes. W.

Rodgers: Oklahoma! Gordon MacRae, Gloria Grahame and cast from the sound track of the film. 1-12" disc (*CL-SAO-955) \$5.95.

Lehar: Land of Smiles (excerpts). One side, and **Lehar: Paganini** (excerpts). Vienna Light Opera Company conducted by Franz Sandauer. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3130) \$3.98.

Our esteemed editor must have had his tongue in his cheek when he coupled these two discs; we guess we're supposed to call this "Old and New World Operetta." *Oklahoma!* is so well known in this country that we need hardly comment on the music. Gordon MacRae, Gloria Grahame, Gene Nelson, Charlotte Greenwood, et al, sing the songs with gusto, and the disc must be accounted a success.

The Lehar disc presents a problem to the critic. The songs are sung in the original German, as is eminently proper; but no libretto or translation is given. Now musical comedy derives as much of its impact from the words as it does from the music (imagine Gilbert & Sullivan sung in Russian, for example); and unless one knows these songs from

Paganini and *The Land of Smiles*, a lot is lost. There's no denying the magic of Lehar's melodies; but actually an orchestral version of these numbers would be as satisfying to the listener who doesn't understand German. Probably more so, as a matter of fact; a foreign language, no matter how perfectly enunciated, is gibberish to one who doesn't understand it, and it spoils one's attempt to concentrate on the music if he tries to make sense out of the words as he listens.

These sentiments are by way of looking at this disc from the non-German-speaking listener; for those who understand German will find the disc quite well done, full of the Old World flavor.

A Milanov Recital. Zinka Milanov (soprano) accompanied by Bozidar Kunc (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1915) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Caro mio ben* (Giordani); *Mondnacht, Widmung* (Schumann); *Am Sonntag Morgen, Wiegenlied* (Brahms); *Zueignung, Freundschaft Vision, Allerseelen, Caecilie* (R. Strauss); *Seh Du's Dan* (Bersa); *Pastirica* (Pavčić); *Ceznja, Strepnja, The World Is Empty* (Kunc); *Do Not Go My Love* (Hageman).

Operatic Recital. Cesare Siepi (bass) with the Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9169) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Salvator Rosa*—Di spose, di padre le gioie serene (Gomes); *Simon Boccanegra*—Il lacerato spirito (Verdi); *Les Huguenots*—Seigneur, rampart et seul soutien & Piff, paff (Meyerbeer); *Robert le Diable*—Nonnes, qui reposez (Meyerbeer); *La Juive*—Si la rigueur (Halévy).

Puccini: La Bohème—Che gelida manina (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: Turandot**—Nessun Dorma (Act III). And **Donizetti: L'Elisir d'Amore**—Una furtiva lagrima (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Jussi Björling (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-7" disc (σV-ERA-245) \$1.49.

Zinka Milanov, by all odds one of the finest dramatic sopranos ever to grace the Metropolitan Opera, here essays a song recital; and, as might be expected, she sings well, with expression and, in most cases, in very good taste. The institution of the "song recital," however, has always upset the writer, for there is invariably a lot of junk cluttering up the program. This stuff is either insisted on by the manager, or the singer is making a bid for popularity or, perhaps, the public either expects or demands it—who knows? Well, after singing (and very well) Giordani's *Caro mio ben*, a pair of Schumann (not too good with *Widmung*), some Brahms and Strauss, what does Miss Milanov do? She sings two Yugoslav songs, three by her brother and the inevitable song in English! The total effect towards the end is nil musically, beautiful vocally and seems an awful waste of talent. Good sound, fair notes, no texts.

The Siepi disc was much more to this writer's

liking. In fact one has never heard the young Italian bass sound so well as he does here—particularly in the Meyerbeer excerpts, which are sung to perfection. The Halevy and Verdi arias are also well sung. The *Gomes Salvatore Rosa* is a novelty—no great shakes musically. The only weak feature here is the very distant orchestra. It is a pity that London can not get better microphone placement on its vocal discs.

The Bjoerling disc is, one believes, a re-issue of a couple of successful 78 rpm discs that came near the end of the old era and so were on tape—it remained only to transfer them to a 45 rpm disc. They are well sung and will delight Bjoerling fans. W.

PIANO



Grieg: (8) Lyric Pieces, Op. 12. One side, and **Grieg: (8) Lyric Pieces, Op. 38.** Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3196) \$3.98.

Prokofiev: Sonata No. 9 in C, Op. 103. One side, and **Prokofiev—trans. Prokofiev: Cinderella, Op. 97—(10) Pieces.** Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3192) \$3.98.

Two more discs by the young Israeli pianist, Menahem Pressler, this month, to add to his long list of MGM discs. His delicate touch is apparent in the sixteen *Lyric Pieces*; these pieces have been termed little gems, and we think you'll find this true; however, we should not care to hear the whole sixty-six of them at a sitting.

It would seem that Mr. Pressler will record all of the piano works of Prokofiev, and the present disc is "Volume 4." MGM is keeping the other three volumes a big, dark secret, however, for nowhere could we find mention of them—not even on its own jacket containing Volume 4. Such mundane matters as issuing the volumes in chronological sequence is of interest only to the critic, however; the collector cares only whether the disc is well done or not. It is. Pressler impresses on his handling of the *Ninth Sonata* (1st LP recording), composed in 1945-7. The *Ten Pieces from Cinderella* are believed, by some musicologists, to be the original piano sketches Prokofiev wrote, from which he developed the complete ballet of the same name. However, the composer claimed just the reverse, that he transcribed the piano works from the ballet score. Whichever way it was, the works seem well suited to the piano, and Mr. Pressler's musicianship is very much in evidence.

Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue. One-half side, and **Gershwin: Concerto in F.** Julius Katchen (piano) with Mantovani and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1262) \$3.98.

If this disc scares you because you can't imagine Mantovani backing up Julius Katchen in these works,

put aside your fears. We, too, have heard much of Mantovani's trick effects on his own discs; but, apparently, he can be serious and play things "straight," if you can call the playing of Gershwin "straight." At any rate, we find this brace of works extremely well done; the works are American, but these artists belie their European heritage (Katchen is an American, having graduated from Haverford College, in Pennsylvania, but his concertizing has been done almost entirely in Europe) and leave nothing to be desired in their presentation of them. Only an occasional British spelling in the jacket notes ("sympathised," for example) gives any evidence of a foreign touch.

There are many other fine versions of these works which the particular collector might prefer; but for a combination of fidelity and performance, we rather feel that the vast majority will prefer the present Katchen-Mantovani record . . . it has everything.

Bach: Das wohltemperierte Clavier (Book 1 complete). Joerg Demus (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-221) \$12.50.

Current Market Price of this set: \$6.48.

A Bach Recital. James Friskin (piano). 3-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-543/5) \$14.94.

CONTENTS: *Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor*; *Italian Concerto in F*; *Cantata No. 106—Sonatina* (arr. Friskin); *Toccata in C minor*; *French Suite No. 3 in B minor*; *French Suite No. 4 in E-flat*; *French Suite No. 5 in G*; *French Suite No. 6 in E*; (15) *Two-Part Inventions*; *Fantasia and Fugue in A minor*; *Chorale-Prelude: O Mensch, bewein dein' Sünde gross* (arr. Friskin); *Fantasia in C minor*; *Fantasia and Double Fugue in A minor*.

We suppose that there are those who prefer *The Well-Tempered Clavier* performed on the piano, although the harpsichord is, to this reviewer, far more satisfying. If you prefer the piano, you'll do well to choose the complete Tureck version (*D-DX-127/8, \$23.96); Mr. Demus seems mannered and arbitrary to us. However, there is really no one but Landowska in this great work (or these great works, as you will) for us.

Mr. Friskin's Bach Recital comes off rather well: nice variety, beautiful reproduction, tasteful performances.

Granados: Goyescas Suite (Part 1). Alicia de Larrocha (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9779) \$3.98.

Granados: Goyescas Suite (Part 2). Nikita Magaloff (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9181) \$2.98.

Although Mmes. de Larrocha and Magaloff perform their respective parts of this sentimental music very well, we rather feel that most collectors would choose Amparo Iturbi's disc (*V-LM-1925, TNR Aug. '55), for Iturbi's contains all seven parts, including *El Pelele*, on one record, saving the purchaser \$2.98 and offering a performance second, in our opinion, to none.

* indicates LP 33 1/8 rpm.
 @ indicates 45 rpm.

Albéniz: Iberia (Bks. 1-4 complete). Three sides, and **Albéniz: Navarra**. And **Albéniz: Cantos de España**. José Echaniz (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-219) \$11.90.

Current Market Price of this set: \$5.98.

Mompou and Albéniz Selections. José Echaniz (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5382) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this set: \$2.99.

CONTENTS: *Canço I Dansa, No. 1; Scènes d'Enfants; Charmes* (Mompou). *Tangos; Malagueñas; Suite Española—Selections* (Albéniz).

José Echaniz impresses this critic as a pianist with a special affinity for the sort of music he essays here: the moody Mompou and the nationalistic Albéniz. If you wish to explore the music of Mompou further, Mompou has made a disc for Angel (*ANG-35147, TNR Apr. '55), playing the three items played here plus many more. Arrau has an old Columbia LP of the first two books of *Iberia*, which is very good performance-wise; but Echaniz' disc features vastly better reproduction plus the complete four books; Echaniz' version is a better buy.

ORGAN



Bach: Toccata in D minor. E. Power Biggs, playing 14 notable European organs of the past five centuries. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5032) \$4.98.

John Harms Organ Recital. John Harms (organ). 1-12" disc (*UNICORN UN-1004) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: (6) *Chorale Preludes* (Bach); *O Gott du frommer Gott* (Karg-Elert); *Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott* (Reger); *Ave Maria* (Reger); *Aria* (Peeters); *An Wasserflüssen Babylon* (Raasted); *The Last Supper* (Weinberger); *Carillon* (Vierne).

For the organist, at least, Biggs' latest Columbia record will be a thrilling adventure. The organist plays just one piece: the thirty measures of the famous *Toccata in D minor* by Bach. The fugue is not played. He plays this same music on fourteen different European organs, the same organs which were heard so magnificently in the recently issued "The Art of the Organ" (*C-SL-219, TNR Apr. '55). It is true that on this disc you hear the same piece fourteen times; but it has a strange fascination, for you are hearing fourteen different organs in the best way to compare them. The same piece by the same artist recorded by the same equipment is probably something that may never happen again on records—and nobody will ever find fourteen more interesting examples of organ building. For those who have the *C-SL-219 set, we would mention that the *Toccata* as played on the Royal Festival Hall organ (London) is also played here; but here it is followed by the *Fugue*, the only time the *Fugue* is played in this set. Since it is the last one on the

second side, it gives a sense of finish to the project, and also gives the owners of *C-SL-219 something new. There has been much thought given to this disc, and it is a wonderful experience, thanks to the courage and imagination of Columbia and Mr. Biggs. We cannot think of any collectors of classical organ records who would not enjoy this unusual record. Needless to say, technically it is superlative. Complete stoplists of all organs, in big, readable print are given on the inside sleeve.

The organ recital by John Harms presents six Bach Chorale Preludes and seven contemporary works, a well balanced program of good material. The organ used is the Möller installed in 1954 at The Community Church in New York City. The organ is inclined to be dark in color compared to most of the squealers built today. The reproduction, while it presents everything produced, does not always seem to present it to the best advantage. More advantageous microphone placement may have been possible, and less weight in the lower frequencies would be better. This disc is good, but not exceptional in playing, registration, or organ tone. S.

Organ Music from Sweelinck to Hindemith. Fritz Heitmann (organ). 2-12" discs in box (*T-LGX-66037/8) \$9.96.

CONTENTS: *Toccata in A minor* (Sweelinck); *Fortune Variations* (Byrd); *Chaconne in F* (Purcell); *Chorale Prelude* ("Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh' darein") (Hanff); *Chorale Variations* ("Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten") (Böhm); *Prelude and Fugue in D* (Micheelsen); *Prelude and Fugue in A minor* (Bach); *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* (Bach); (3) *Chorale Preludes* ("O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden," "Erschienen ist der herrlich Tag," "Heut singt die liebe Christenheit") (Pepping); *Sonata No. 1* (1937) (Hindemith).

One of the most admired organists of our day is heard again on discs, this time in a two-disc album of fairly broad scope. A glance at the contents listed above is enough to whet the appetite of most organ fans. Sweelinck, Byrd, Purcell, Hanff, and Böhm are a substantial offering of German and English music of the 16th and 17th centuries. Bach is represented with two major works, and the Heitmann performance of the *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* is about the best you are ever likely to hear. Micheelsen and Pepping are contemporary German composers (born 1902 and 1901 respectively), and their works are interesting examples of the contemporary trend in Germany.

Of particular interest in this collection is the Hindemith *Sonata No. 1*, which occupies the fourth side in the album. The Hindemith sonatas have had a wide and growing acceptance among organists. As abstract organ music in the contemporary idiom, the *Sonata No. 1* is a prime example of how good modern music can be. To have a man of Heitmann's ability and renown heard in this music is one of the high-

lights of the album. Whatever Heitmann plays, there is a marked clarity of thinking and of execution, together with a fine regard for registration. His brilliant playing, such as the Sweelinck *Toccata*, is beyond comparison. We would recommend this set highly, for the reproduction is fine. The only thing we did not like is the fact that nowhere on the discs or on the jackets was the name of the organ listed. This is a stupid and unforgivable oversight on someone's part.



DICTION

The Greatest Moments in Sports. Actual sounds and voices of sport figures and radio and TV announcers. 1-12" disc in folder (*C-ML-5000) \$5.95.

This disc features some fine photographs, written commentary by Red Smith, and narration by Don Dunphy, Clem McCarthy, Mel Allen and Marty Glickman, and covers great moments in the history of Boxing, Football, Tennis, Baseball, Olympics, and Horse Racing. The tenseness undoubtedly felt by the crowds and the participants at these events is undeniable, but more often than not the record fails to transmit this excitement to the present listener. The double by Cookie Lavagetto to break up Bill Bevens' no-hit World's Series game (1947), Bobby Thomson's miraculous home run to win the pennant for the Giants in 1951, and Knute Rockne's pep talk to his Notre Dame team (1925) do carry tremendous excitement; but Helen Jacobs' explanation of why Helen Wills walked off the tennis court in 1933, forfeiting the match, or Adolf Hitler opening the 1936 Olympic games, were about as dull as the aforementioned three were thrilling.

If Columbia was trying to come up with another *I Can Hear It Now* (TNR Dec. '48), it missed.

MISCELLANEOUS



Walton: Façade. Edith Sitwell and Peter Pears (reading) with the English Opera Group conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1133) \$3.98.

Almost exactly six years ago Columbia issued a little 10-inch disc of Edith Sitwell's *Façade* with music by William Walton (*C-ML-2047, TNR June '49). This record has enjoyed an unusual sale for an item of its kind; it featured Dr. Sitwell reading 19 of the 20 poems with David Horner reading the *Tango Pasodoble*. A description of the work was contained in that issue of TNR, from which we quote:

"Written 25 years ago, *Façade* is one of the earliest attempts to express in literature and music the art then being introduced by abstractionist painters and sculptors. It was first performed in London in 1922 and proved a highly controversial offering. Since that time it has won greater popularity, and a performance

of the work recently at the Museum of Modern Art in New York was completely sold out. . . . The poems, according to their author, are abstract patterns which tell no story and point no moral—a matter of moods and rhythms brought out by the accompanying music.

"Dr. Sitwell's verse is a remarkable study in rhythm, sound and imagery. Walton's music, written when the composer was only nineteen, matches Dr. Sitwell's verse in color and in humor. The poems (are) half sung, half read. . . ."

One fault, to which we did not take exception in the Columbia issue, was Dr. Sitwell's reading of the rapid verses; this requires singular skill in breathing and in controlling the lips, tongue and throat, and Dr. Sitwell sometimes got out of breath (in the *Tarantella*, for example). The present very fine London disc features Peter Pears, the excellent English tenor, reading these verses (which sound like the Gilbert and Sullivan patter songs); Mr. Pears has the control necessary and, so far as we could hear, didn't skip a syllable. A booklet containing all the words accompanies the disc, and it must be acquitted a most successful offering.

Ruggles: Men and Mountains—Lilacs. And **Ruggles: Portals.** Juilliard String Orchestra conducted by Frederick Prausnitz. And **Ruggles: Evocations** (Four Chants for Piano). John Kirkpatrick (piano). One side, and **Cowell: Toccata.** Carleton S. Smith (flute), Helen Boatwright (soprano), Aldo Parisot (violinello), and John Kirkpatrick (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4986) \$4.98.

Thomson: Quartet No. 2. Juilliard String Quartet. One side, and **Schuman: Voyage.** Beveridge Webster (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4987) \$4.98.

Barber: (10) Hermit Songs. Leontyne Price (soprano) accompanied by Samuel Barber (piano). One side, and **Haiuff: Quartet No. 1.** Juilliard String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4988) \$4.98.

Glanville-Hicks: Sonata for Piano and Percussion (1952). Carlo Bussotti (piano) and the New York Percussion Group conducted by Carlo Surinach. And **Glanville-Hicks: Concertino da Camera for Piano, Flute, Clarinet and Bassoon.** New York Woodwind Ensemble with Carlo Bussotti (piano). One side, and **Lopatnikoff: Variations and Epilogue for Violoncello and Piano.** Nikolai Graudan (violinello) and Joanna Graudan (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4990) \$4.98.

Columbia's Modern American Music Series goes on apace. We cannot see how it can be successful economically; but certainly Columbia deserves a pat on the back for bringing these American compositions before the public.

Carl Ruggles "... is noted for the uncompromising style of his music . . .," so the jacket notes tell us. Now one who won't compromise is either right and knows he's right, or wrong and doesn't know he's

wrong. Ruggles' *Lilacs* and *Portals* develop some sonorous chords and some nice orchestral color, but lacked any appeal whatsoever. His *Evocations* haven't even any color to offer. Perhaps a little compromise might not be amiss. Cowell's *Toccanta* (yes, there's an "n" in that word!) takes but one half side of this disc, the rest being blank. We guess Columbia couldn't think of anything to go with it. The first disc, then, is only for the collector of American music—others will not care for it at all.

Virgil Thomson's *Quartet No. 2* is quite appealing and easy to take; but don't let that fool you, for there's lots of real meat here. It begins in excitement and ends in tranquility; it is logically constructed, sonorous, melodious, packed with emotion not obvious on one or two hearings. William Schuman's *Voyage* is a cycle of five pieces for piano. Schuman, like Thomson, is better known than many of the composers represented on these four discs (Samuel Barber, too, is excepted); he has developed no little following in this country, and since so few of his works are available on discs, this piano work will be welcome to his coterie of admirers.

"Samuel Barber's *Hermit Songs* were commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation . . . were first performed, with . . . (Barber) at the piano, by Leontine Price, at the Library of Congress (in) . . . 1953. These . . . are short, direct observations of the anonymous Irish monks and scholars during the 8th to 13th centuries . . ." These notes, taken from the jacket of this disc, describe the songs adequately. Texts are given, too. Alexei Haieff's *First Quartet* was first performed in May, 1951, at Ojai, Calif. Virgil Thomson has described it as "music of gesture rather than of intense lyric afflatus . . . (It is an) original and free composition . . . (containing) light . . . as well as lightness."

Peggy Glanville-Hicks' *Sonata for Piano and Percussion* is noisy and bombastic, but it does contain an element of excitement; it is not recommended for a "morning after." Her *Concertino* is quite charming, a piece of musical lace. Lopatnikoff's *Variations and Epilogue* will not attract on first hearing—'cello and piano together not being very appealing; it was dedicated to the memory of the composer's first wife. About the third hearing we got into the feeling of the thing and found it enjoyable.

The artists who perform all of these sundry numbers are of excellent caliber. These are all first recordings, and comparison is, therefore, impossible; but no exception could be taken to the artistic playing, and the reproduction of each disc is superb.

Brute Force Steel Bands. Steel Bands of Antigua, B. W. I. 1-12" disc (*SOT-1042) \$3.49.

Well, sir, Emory Cook has done it again! The title of this record did not attract us, nor did the photographs nor the descriptive notes. But the sounds which emanate from this disc are quite captivating (you may not be enchanted by the few

vocals).

The steel band is almost entirely a post-World War II phenomenon because it makes use of drums made of steel oil cans which became plentiful in the British West Indies during the war. One end of the can is cut off, and the remaining end serves as the drum head; it is marked with a cold chisel, so that the drummer may learn how to control the sounds it will make. It is played with rubbered or padded sticks. Maracas, gourd and wood blocks make up the completed band, according to the jacket notes—a total of 14 to 16 instruments. We'd swear there's a xylophone somewhere; something is making the melodies, and it surely isn't oil can drums.

The music on this disc is mostly played by the Brute Force Steel Band of Antigua, although a couple of them are played by the Big Shell Steel Band and one by the Hell's Gate Steel Band. Mambos, calypso songs, sambas, boleros and merengues make up the selections, plus, of all things, *Under the Double Eagle*. Persons who have traveled to the B. W. I. have been quite taken with the steel bands there, and they will more than likely wish this disc as a souvenir; but we hope that a few other daring souls will try this one—it's quite something to hear. As always with Sounds of Our Times records, the reproduction is high, wide and handsome.

NOTE: Just as we went to press we got the word that Sounds of Our Times had reduced its prices: all 10-inch are now \$2.98; 12-inch are all \$3.49, with the following exceptions, which are \$4.98: 1060, 1062, 1087, 1094, and 1169.

Schönberg: Pierrot Lunaire, Op. 21. Alice Howland (speaker), Edward Steuermann (piano), Lois Schaefer (flute & piccolo), Donald Lituchy (clarinet), David Kalina (bass clarinet), Robert Koff (violin and viola), and Seymour Barab (violin-cello) conducted by Arthur Winograd. 1-12" disc (*MGME-3202) \$3.98.

Schönberg's melodrama for recitation and chamber orchestra, written in 1912, is still a controversial conversation piece in music circles. What is remarkable about the work is that it has held a rather large group of interested persons over the years. The twenty-one poems by Albert Giraud are not sung but spoken along a given melodic line. The rather lean instrumental part has an expressionistic power that is undeniable, a power which tends to pull the listener along, however violent his initial reaction may have been. The poems of Pierrot Lunaire's adventures are not as direct as Mother Goose rhymes, but they paint a vivid picture, and the music pushes the text into even bolder relief.

Columbia has issued a version of this work conducted by the composer, and one would assume that to be the definitive reading. Nevertheless, we would suggest that those interested in *Pierrot* investigate the present disc, for it is beautifully recorded with quiet surfaces and nice balance. Alice Howland ap-

pealed to us more than Erika Stiedry-Wagner in the speaker's part, although reproduction may have influenced this opinion somewhat. Edward Steuermann is pianist in both versions (no doubt one of the few who ever mastered this fiendish part). MGM is to be congratulated on an extremely difficult job well done—doubly so considering this is not destined for the hit parade of classical music. S.

HARPSICHORD



Falla: Concerto for Harpsichord. And **Surinach: Tientos.** One side, and **Rieti: Partita.** Sylvia Marlowe (harpsichord) with the Concert Arts Players. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8309) \$4.98.

Harpsichord Recital. Julieta Goldschwartz (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*McINTOSH MC-1001) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto in F, Concerto in C, Concerto in G (Vivaldi-Bach); Concerto in D minor (Marcello-Bach).*

It is curious that there is a Mercury record in the LP catalog containing both the Falla *Concerto for Harpsichord* (played by Kirkpatrick) and the Rieti *Partita* (with Sylvia Marlowe) (*ME-MG-10012, TNR Apr. '49 & Oct. '50). Curious to us, anyway, since we haven't thought of these works from the last time we played that disc (1950) until now; how did Capitol happen to choose the same coupling? Falla's *Concerto* hasn't gained in popularity (but oh! it must be a real towser to play!), and Rieti's *Partita* is just as tuneful and pleasing. Surinach's *Tientos* (meaning, says the composer, "Essays") are weird-sounding numbers, the point of which escapes us.

Sylvia Marlowe is well-known as an outstanding harpsichordist, and you may be certain that she gives her all to these works. And Capitol's reproduction puts the now ancient Mercury pre-Olympian disc in the shade.

McIntosh, known to phonophiles as a fine manufacturer of high fidelity amplifiers, has recently entered the record manufacturing business; it suggests that this disc will sound best on a 30-watt amplifier, "... (such as) the McIntosh equipment, MC-30, MC-60, 50 W-2 or other models. . . ." Times don't change. Victor used to say that Victor (acoustic) records sounded best only on the genuine Victrola (using, of course, Victor Tungs-tone needles). The McIntosh record sounded fine to us on a little Magnavox "Playfellow" (\$99.50) and simply great on a Philips "Concerto Grand" (\$850).

Mme. Goldschwartz, born in Buenos Aires, having studied in France under Landowska, and now residing in Mexico City, plays these ever-lovely Vivaldi and Marcello works beautifully.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classics, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 † indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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SOME RECORD publishers are now offering "sampler" records at very low prices. These should be very popular with record buyers. The "sampler" record is just what its name implies: it contains samples from a series of recordings. For example, the first listed below, "Meet Andre Kostelanetz," contains selections from a number of Kostelanetz LP records. The idea is, of course, that after you have secured the "sampler" record, you will want to buy several of the Kostelanetz discs from which these samples were chosen . . . The "Red Seal Selector" contains outstanding selections from a series of LP records that RCA Victor is issuing to celebrate its fifty-five years in the field of classical recording . . . The "RCA Camden Sampler" offers samples from RCA Victor's low price line of recordings—the idea is to show what may be had at a modest price on Camden discs.

In each case the record buyer gets a great deal for his money. The complete selections and the excerpts are so arranged on these "samplers" that one may play the records through without any jolting breaks. Limited quantities of these discs are available. If your local dealer cannot supply you, orders sent to the publisher of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

The first is entitled "Meet Andre Kostelanetz." It contains *In the Still of the Night*, *Where or When*, *Easy to Love*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, *Overture from Carmen*, *Love for Three Oranges*, *Celeste Aida*, *Waltz of the Flowers*, *Song of India*, *I Love You*, *I'll Follow My Secret Heart*, and *So in Love*. 1-12" disc (*C-KZ-1) 98c.

The next one is entitled "Red Seal Selector," and it contains twelve samples from RCA Victor's "Fabulous Fifty-Fifth" Anniversary

release, as follows: excerpts from Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony, Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" Symphony, Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and *Manon Lescaut*, Brahms' *Violin Concerto*, Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, Bizet's *Carmen Suite*, the four *Romeo and Juliets* (see p. 6), Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*. 1-12" disc (*V-SRL-12-14) 98c.

The last is the "RCA Camden Sampler," containing Edward Strauss' *Fast Track Polka*, Falla's *Ritual Dance of Fire*, *Home on the Range* (John Charles Thomas), Chabrier's *Joyous March*, Lecuona's *Unchained Melody*, Brahms' *Hungarian Dance No. 1*, Sousa's *El Capitan March* (Goldman Band); the popular songs *Guilty*, *Bei Mir bist du schön*, *Annie Laurie*; and excerpts from Bernstein's *On the Town*, Handel's *Messiah*, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" Symphony. 1-12" disc (*CAMDEN SCL-12-8) 89c.

* * *

Last month THE NEW RECORDS carried the announcement of Columbia's new LP Record Club, and a little brochure was enclosed with each copy for your convenience in joining. We should like to thank the many persons who sent their membership applications to us and to assure them that, although it was impossible to acknowledge each application individually, each was gratefully received; the free bonus records will be on their way to these new members shortly.

It is not too late to join the Columbia LP Record Club, and we would certainly appreciate it if you would place your application for membership through us. If you have mislaid the little brochure which fully describes the

operation of the club and contains an application blank for joining, we will be happy to send you one. A postal requesting the Columbia LP Record Club brochure will bring one by return mail.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see TNR Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

NOTE: The **Current Market Price** of Westminster 4000- and 5000-series, 12-inch Haydn Society, L'Anthologie Sonore, and Urania LP's is \$2.99.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning October, 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1901) \$3.98.

From the first few moments of this recording one is aware that here is something exceptional in

a recording of a work which already has more than a dozen and a half LP's now in the catalogs. Here is Pierre Monteux at the very zenith of his powers as a conductor. At his ripe old age he proves to be stronger than ever and to be greater than nearly all of his contemporaries. And without wishing to start anything, we will say that he proves to be far superior to the permanent conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, for recordings of the B.S.O. rarely sound like this one these days. For style, quality, finish, and accuracy this is indeed a recent high for B.S.O. Any who have seen Monteux conduct marvel at how he ever does it, for he is the least obviously energetic of conductors, but there is some magic in his ways that brings the best out of any group. The best of the Boston players shines through this record in a manner that one cannot but praise to the limit. RCA Victor achieves reproduction that is second to none for clarity and perspective as well as for lovely orchestral quality. This disc sounds good on any phonograph, but it sounds simply marvelous on a big high fidelity set. Surfaces are silken.

Monteux's interpretation of this much mangled work is another joy. Without wallowing, he manages to portray its pathos. Without disturbing the obvious romantic flavor, he has a general tightening up of the score which clothes it with a dignity and profile often missing. This is well organized thinking that yet retains the traditional aspects we all like. Ormandy and Steinberg, other previous stars of this work on LP, are being crowded rather uncomfortably; the rest of them have been completely pushed aside. S.

Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake (Acts II & III). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-12" disc in folder (*V-LM-1894) \$3.98.

Ravel: Daphnis and Chloe. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc in folder (*V-LM-1893) \$3.98.

Ravel: Daphnis and Chloe. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc in folder (*ME-MG-50048) \$6.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$5.56.

For those who do not wish three LP's of the complete *Swan Lake*, the present disc offers the complete Acts II and III in a splendid performance by Leopold Stokowski. Stokowski indulges in very little tampering, favors rather brisk tempos, and makes the music theatrical in a surprisingly conservative way. This is truly a fine reading of the music and is well recorded. None of the similar recordings, that is, two sided versions of these Acts, is any better, and we would clearly recommend this one. The disc is housed in a folder which contains elaborate notes and pictures—a very attractive offering at the price.

Most persons interested in a complete recording

of the Ravel *Daphnis and Chloe* ballet (all the music with orchestra, chorus and nothing omitted) will find that a choice between these two versions and the older complete version by Ansermet will be decided by your preference in matters of reproduction. Those who wish to draw fine lines of interpretation may do so. Münch is famed for his interpretations of the French repertoire, and Dorati is equally acclaimed for his performances of ballet music. To us, it is give and take all the way through, with the result being a draw; we will leave it to the more astute students of Ravel who is the better.

The music sounds excellent in both versions, and a vast majority will agree on that. As for the reproduction, it is also excellent in both cases, although it differs radically in one way. Mercury's recording has a perspective (and it can be described in no other way) that Victor's lacks. Both are revealing, wide range recordings that miss nothing. Victor's is closer and a shade coarser; Mercury's is fine-grained with that concert-hall feeling of perspective that, to us, is so precious in any recording. A by-product of this type of reproduction is that it is not inclined to produce ear fatigue—which is no laughing matter for record reviewers after the fifth hour of solid listening. Try these two, and see what you think of the differences; it is a subtle matter, but an interesting one. S.

Bizet: Carmen Suites Nos. 1 & 2. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-W-LAB-7005) \$7.50.

Bizet: L'Arlésienne Suites Nos. 1 & 2. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-W-LAB-7006) \$7.50.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 3, 4 & 6. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-W-LAB-7007) \$7.50.

Our readers have been introduced to the magnificent reproduction offered by Westminster's Laboratory Series (e. g., See TNR Aug. '55). The time limitations of these discs is a distinct handicap in selecting works to offer in this series; nevertheless we think you'll find that the above-listed seven numbers are admirably suited to this process.

Since these discs are obviously for demonstration purposes, any criticism of the performances would not matter very much to those interested; however, it is nice to be able to say that Maestro Rodzinski performs his four Bizet Suites as well as one could hope for, and if Herr Scherchen seems a bit un-Hungarian and heavy-handed in his Liszt, we can assume that he did so to make the recording (and that miraculous reproduction) the more exciting. (NOTE: As before, in his handling of Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 1, 2 & 5*, Dr. Scherchen

found it necessary to split one—No. 6—in order not to run over the time limit per side).

The reason for this serious time limit, for those who are not engineering-minded, is due to the necessity of spacing the grooves farther apart than on other microgroove records. This prevents one groove, on a particularly wide cut (at a very loud part, for example), from "bumping" into the preceding or succeeding groove, causing what is known as a pre- or post-echo. About 15 minutes is all one can get on a 12-inch side with this expanded groove spacing used in the Westminster Laboratory series.

The records are packaged first in a pliofilm bag, placed between the heavy covers of a cardboard folder, and then inserted in a heavy plastic bag with a zipper opener—very plush and handsome. The surfaces are glassy smooth, and the reproduction, as previously noted, is without peer. J.

Dvořák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5370) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 36. One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93.** Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc. (*WEST-WL-5362) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$2.99.

Of the making of good discs of Dvořák's "New World" there certainly seems to be no end. It is just impossible to give most of them the brush-off, for there are a number of fine performances of this magnificent symphony. After hearing many of these recordings now and then, and we have heard every LP on the major labels at least once, the one that remains your reviewer's favorite is by Horenstein (*VX-PL-7590). For dramatic impact this is unrivalled. It is admittedly not the only good version. Among worthy disc versions of the "New World" must be mentioned Galliera, Kubelik, Ormandy, and at least three or four others. Artur Rodzinski performs the music along accepted lines and often achieves some telling effects by stressing inner lines. The over-all effect is that of a carefully thought out interpretation—one successfully realized by the orchestra. While we cannot give this a clear "highest recommendation," we would surely place it in the upper brackets for your consideration. Reproduction is clear and rather on the brassy side.

Beethoven's *Second Symphony* is easily one of the most beautiful of all his works, despite the tragic circumstances under which it was penned; yet it is represented in the LP lists with the fewest recordings of any of his symphonies. Scherchen offers a generally fine reading of the work, although he tends to push the first and fourth movements a shade too much for our taste, an opinion which most folks will prob-

ably not share. We will be less dainty in our opinion of Herr Scherchen's *Eighth*, for it is rather apparent on comparison playings that Scherchen is guilty again of choppy playing, a fact which continually plagues his efforts. Compare, for example, the opening passages of the first movement and of the last movement with Steinberg (*CL-P-8292). Steinberg's tempos are about the same but what a difference in the orchestral performance. Much of Scherchen's work just does not ring true with this reviewer, and he cannot recommend the *Eighth* over Steinberg or at least four other versions in the LP lists. Reproduction of this disc is good. S.

A Toscanini Omnibus. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6026) \$7.98.

CONTENTS: *Carmen Suite No. 1* (Bizet); *Don Pasquale—Overture* (Donizetti); *La Forza del Destino—Overture* (Verdi); *Oberon—Overture* (Weber); *Euryanthe—Overture* (Weber); *Der Freischütz—Overture* (Weber); *Hansel und Gretel—Prelude* (Humperdinck); *Mignon—Overture* (Thomas); *La Wally—Prelude* (Act IV) (Catalani); *Lorelei—Dance of the Water Nymphs* (Act III) (Catalani); *Poet and Peasant Overture* (Suppé); *Kamarinskaya* (Glinka); *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 17—Queen Mab Scherzo (Berlioz); *La Damnation de Faust—Rakóczy March* (Berlioz).

RCA Victor's *A Toscanini Omnibus* offers two discs in a box with a fine 12" by 12" booklet full of pictures and a commentary by Samuel Chotzinoff. The contents of the discs, as listed above, have been culled from here and there, and are familiar to most Toscanini admirers. The last four listed above are acknowledged on the label to have been taken from broadcasts (1940, 1943, 1945, 1951) and some of the others sound of about that vintage. Nowhere in this album is there reproduction comparable with today's standard. This album amounts to a reminiscence of the art of this great conductor rather than a full-blooded portrayal of it, as far as reproduction is concerned.

The everlasting argument about what is great music and what is not could be pursued with relish most of the way through this collection. There is something thrilling about a great conductor taking a neglected or a much abused work of lesser stature and raising it to a new standard through a fine reading. Toscanini has been an acknowledged master at this, and it is that aspect of his art that is most accurately revealed in this collection. There is no mention of what he did (or did not) do for the American composers and contemporary composers in general. Toscanini blazed precious few new trails in the course of music (other than revivals). We would not like to consider this album as a monument to his art, for he has done better and greater things every year of his life. As a collection of prevailingly lighter works done with scrupulous care, it is an

admirable group. Those who like this sort of music will hear it done with decency rather than in the slapdash manner usually found. If the contents interest you, this album can be highly recommended. We cannot figure out why RCA Victor labels the album "A 'New Orthophonic' High Fidelity Recording," for not one piece in it is that. S.

Handel: (12) Concerti Grossi, Op. 6 (complete). English Baroque Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 4-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-403) \$24.45.

Current Market Price of this set: \$12.46.

Handel: (4) Concerti Grossi, Op. 6. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*EPIC-LC-3097) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerti Grossi in G, Op. 6, No. 1; in B-flat, Op. 6, No. 7; in F, Op. 6, No. 2; in G minor, Op. 6, No. 6.*

Handel: (12) Concerti Grossi, Op. 6 (complete). Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-21) \$11.94. (TNR Dec. '50, Aug. '52, & Apr. '54).

There are no fewer than four complete recordings of Handel's mighty Opus 6 currently in the LP catalogs, all with excellent fidelity and performances. We should think this would be enough. Each will have its adherents, and one's choice will be a personal one, based on a preference for a particular conductor, or on price. For the value conscious, we list here the Current-Market Price of each version: Busch (*C-SL-158, \$19.92); Lehmann (*D-DX-126, \$15.98); Neel and Scherchen are given in the heading above.

For those not desiring all twelve *Concerti Grossi* of Op. 6, Epic has issued a fine LP of four of them, listed above. All of these are lovely to hear; however, it's hard to stop with just four.

Boyd Neel's versions of the Handel *Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6, have found favor with collectors all over the country, and since 10-inch LP's seem to be passing out of existence, except for the "short-play" discs (such as London's LD-series or Columbia's AL-series) London has issued the present volume containing all twelve of the *Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6, formerly contained on six 10-inch discs and reviewed in THE NEW RECORDS in the issues indicated in the heading.

Chabrier: España. And Revueltas: Sensemaya. One side, and **Revueltas: Cuauhnahuac.** And **Mossolov: The Iron Foundry.** Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Argeo Quadri. 1-12" disc (*WEST-W-LAB-7004) \$7.50.

Westminster's Laboratory Series continues to produce the ultimate in carefully made records, with records of exceptional quality preserved in good packaging. The fourth in the series is the best yet, with the most interesting material and the best sound.

This one will appeal particularly to hi-fi fans, for it demonstrates percussion instruments well, a favorite subject among hi-fiers. The selections also have appeal for the collector of music on records (as distinguished from the collector of sounds on records—occasionally the twain do meet). With the exception of *España*, the material is new to LP. As for *España*, Ormandy can outplay Quadri in the accepted tradition of playing this cream puff; but Quadri makes it sound like good music just the same, and the clarity of reproduction is a thrill in itself. The rest of the disc is noise that has been well organized by skilled composers. What is more important is that Westminster's engineers and their manner of getting the music on discs proves that some of the things we are inclined to call musical noise on records may not actually have been that at the time it was being performed. These boys have achieved a clarity—even in the crazy Mossolov *Iron Foundry*—that is something new to records. Truly, this is a tour de force in reproduction. If this type of reproduction could be extended to twenty or thirty minutes per side, it would represent the ultimate that can be expected from disc reproduction. As it is, the material offered here, complete on each side, is ideal for the medium, and we recommend this disc most highly to those interested in the selections, as well as to those who are seeking the cream of hi-fi discs for demonstration purposes.

S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64.

Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 2-12" discs (*WEST-W-LAB-8001) \$11.25.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90

("Italian"). Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-W-LAB-7008) \$7.50.

With such records as these there is posed the problem of sound and science versus art and music. Needless to say, the problem will not be solved except, perhaps, to each one's own satisfaction.

The Tchaikovsky *Symphony No. 5 in E minor*, insofar as sound goes, is very impressive. There is a clarity of tone found in few of the very best present day records. Being spaced out over three record sides (one side for each of the first two movements and the last two movements on side three), the sound is enhanced by not being crowded or run too far towards the center. Musically, there may be better Tchaikovsky *Fifths*—notably Dorati's on Mercury (*ME-MG-50008)—but these will be of little consequence to anyone interested in these Westminster Laboratory discs.

As an artistic effort, Sir Adrian's version of Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony is a fine, straightforward job; and, here again, its chief feature is its elegant sound. It is foolish to make comparisons, price-wise; if the "Italian" is what you want, you will choose any of the several versions available at

\$3.98 or \$4.98. But if you are interested in really putting your phonograph to the test, you may be assured that these discs will show off (or show up) your instrument; and you'll be getting adequate readings of the works involved.

Westminster's Laboratory Series, then, is for the hi-fi specialist who is looking for absolute perfection in sound; and as such, these discs are recommended without reservation.

W.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55

("Eroica"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1899) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60.

Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Ah Perfido, Op. 65.** Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35203TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35203) \$4.98.

Reiner's idea of the "Eroica" is very neat, orderly, clearly defined, articulated, and put on LP with adroitness and dispatch. It is well recorded, and the whole thing is cut and dried in nice, neat little pieces that fit the package perfectly. As far as getting under the skin a bit and making us feel that here is the "Eroica," one of the great symphonies among them all, a work with a message of depth and drama—well, it did not do that in the least as far as this listener was concerned. We cannot criticise what is played or the way it is played, technically. It all seems in order and executed with precision. If that is the way you like it, this will fill the bill very well. If you want more than the notes you will have to look for another version; the LP lists contain at least a dozen versions with more meat on the bones than this performance.

Hearing von Karajan dig into the *Fourth* after the above was a tonic. The orchestra, the texture of the reproduction, everything had the effect of riveting attention to the fact that here was a performance which meant business and was controlled by a man deeply concentrating on the subject at hand. There is an intensity about von Karajan's reading of the *Fourth* which is compelling. The wonders of this symphony are often elusive, but the present interpreter captures them all and puts them on display in a masterly manner. The delicate pastoral moods, the moments of strength and grandeur are well set forth. Needless to say the Philharmonia is great, and the reproduction is splendid.

Ah Perfido is sung by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf with a purity of tone that never leaves, regardless of the dramatic expression or the exceptional difficulties of the vocal line. She projects this Scene and Aria with noble effect; it is good to have such an admirable performance of this rarely done work. The orchestral portion is excellent and the recording is in perfect balance.

S.

Berlioz: Romeo and Juliet (3 excerpts). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. One and one-half sides, and **Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet** (Overture-Fantasia). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. One-half side, and **Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet** (4 excerpts from Suites Nos. 1, 2, and 3). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. One side, and **Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet** (5 excerpts). Geraldine Brooks, Blanche Yurka and Hurd Hatfield. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6028) \$7.98.

RCA Victor has assembled an album of music and the spoken word based on the Romeo and Juliet story. The Berlioz and Tchaikovsky recordings have been previously issued; the Prokofiev is new. We would say without hesitation that the Prokofiev is by far the finest performance of this great score that has appeared on records. Stokowski has selected five excerpts from Suites 1, 2, and 3 and made a well balanced suite in itself. Those excerpts performed are the following complete sections from the suites: Romeo at the Fountain, Juliet, Romeo and Juliet, Romeo at the Tomb of Juliet, and Death of Juliet. After hearing this performance, one is inclined to wonder whether Prokofiev did not do the best job of them all in portraying this poignant play in music. As the years roll on we imagine Prokofiev's music will at least stand beside the other composers' versions—if not exceed them—as a truly great conception of the love, pathos, and drama of the Romeo and Juliet story. Stokowski has caught the essence of Prokofiev's deeply felt writing in a manner that is uncanny. We have never heard anything better.

Münch and Cantelli are both in top form for the Berlioz excerpts and the thrice-familiar Tchaikovsky fantasy.

To this listener, it was an error to play the spoken excerpts from Shakespeare's play after having heard the music. It seemed, frankly, superficial. We suggest the album be played as music only, or as speaking only—or else play the spoken side first. As a music critic, we will offer no critical comment on the spoken side. All the reproduction in this album is good, and the packaging and booklet are very fine. S.

Hindemith: Nobilissima Visione (Suite). One side, and **Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a** ("St. Antoni Chorale"). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35221TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35221) \$4.98.

It is to be hoped that Angel issues many discs with Otto Klemperer conducting that are the equal of this one. More Klemperer and less of some other baton swingers would be good for the LP lists. Klemperer is one of the great conductors of our time, and he has never sounded better on records than in the present disc. He has, for a change, a really first class orchestra, for there are few peers of the Phil-

harmonia among orchestras anywhere today. Klemperer takes the Brahms *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* and demonstrates what is really in this music, and what is often missing. There is tenderness and gracefulness in good measure, and there is magnificent strength where intended. This is music of sharp contrasts among its many variations, and Klemperer realizes a performance that is not bettered by any others on records. Much credit goes to the orchestra and to the exceptionally fine reproduction.

Hindemith's *Nobilissima Visione* has been available on LP in a performance by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (*C-ML-4177) and the experts on Hindemith will have a good time comparing these two fine versions. We believe most of them will prefer Klemperer. A comparison left us with the feeling that Klemperer had identified himself with the score more deeply than Ormandy, that Klemperer was blazing with enthusiasm and understanding for the content of the score as well as for its unusual complexities. The reproduction, being newer, is better; and the surfaces are quieter in the present disc. We would recommend this disc highly (both sides) and await more of its stature. S.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18014) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18014) \$4.98.

Geminiani: (6) Concerti Grossi, Op. 3 (complete). English Baroque Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18002) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18002) \$4.98.

These two discs, representing music written over a century apart, only serve to demonstrate again, if such a demonstration were necessary, the erudition and musical versatility of the redoubtable Dr. Hermann Scherchen.

The Mahler *Symphony No. 1* is given a spacious reading, a little on the conservative side but always interesting and essentially musical. There are many other versions of this popular symphony listed in the Schwann catalog, and this one can be numbered with the best. Perhaps the Kubelik reading on London has more excitement and drive, but Dr. Scherchen is more concerned with the innate poetry of the score and emphasizes its lyrical aspects. Each approach will have its adherents and, by and large, everyone should be able to find a performance to make him happy. There is good sound; but the reviewer can not say anything about the notes or de luxe packaging, for Westminster supplied the economy package for review purposes.

Francesco Geminiani was, if Grove's is to be trusted, about the longest-lived of composers. He was born in Lucca in 1667 and died in Dublin in September of the year 1762! One is particularly astonished by Grove's final sentence on the life of Geminiani—"Grief for the loss of an MS treatise,

stolen from his lodging in College Green, is said to have hastened (!) his death."

The six *Concerti* that make up *Opus 3* were written about 1733 and are in the general style of Corelli but with a little more freedom of style. The English Baroque Orchestra plays well, indeed, and Dr. Scherchen's sweeping and animated performance is just what the music requires. Superior sound here, too. W.

Calendar Girl. Andre Kostelanetz and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-811) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Laura, Stella, Mimi, Ruby, Diane, Anna, Liza, Have You Met Miss Jones?, Vilja, Sweet Leilani, Jeanie, Musetta.*

Selections from the Music of Richard Rodgers.

Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Richard Rodgers. 1-12" disc (*C-CL-810) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: (4) *Waltzes; March of the Siam-ese Children* (from "The King and I"); *Waltz* (from "Carousel"); *Slaughter on 10th Avenue* (from "On Your Toes"); *Victory at Sea.*

Anderson Pops Concert. Leroy Anderson and his "Pop" Concert Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9749) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *The Girl in Satin; Song of the Bells; The Last Rose of Summer; The Typewriter; Turn Ye to Me; The Minstrel Boy; Bugler's Holiday; The First Day of Spring; The Bluebells of Scotland; Forgotten Dreams; Sandpaper Ballet; Summer Skies.*

Three tuneful discs this month containing music of a popular nature. "Kosty" has selected a "calendar" girl for each month; he may have left out your favorite (like *Sweet Lorraine*), but then, you can't please everybody . . . Richard Rodgers seems to write nothing but hits, and here are eight of his very best . . . Leroy Anderson certainly plays his own stuff like no one else can, and offers another large helping of them to his many fans.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1900) \$3.98.

The present recording of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique* is a long-awaited one—perhaps the long waiting led the writer to expect too much, for he was bitterly disappointed in the performance as recorded here.

The chief reason for the lack of enthusiasm in these columns is due to a certain mannerism of Charles Münch's—a very disconcerting mannerism for this listener. M. Münch, either deliberately or unconsciously, does not keep a regular or consistent tempo and speeds up the orchestra towards the end of each movement. If this is unconsciously done, one wishes he could have noticed it from the playbacks and corrected it; if deliberate, it ranks as a rather obvious bid for applause (a sort of musical flag

waving). Now while these *accelerandi* might pass almost unnoticed on a single hearing, they pall rapidly on subsequent hearings. It is a great pity, for the recorded sound is remarkable for its clarity, dynamic range and faithfulness to detail. RCA Victor's multi-microphone technique is very much in evidence and very wonderful.

Still the best *Fantastique*, then, from a musical point of view (and what other point is there?) is Dorati's performance on Mercury (TNR Dec. '54). Played movement by movement (as this writer did) Dorati's masterly and essentially musical concept of the score is demonstrated very convincingly. Mercury's single microphone recording is also very brilliant, although not quite a match for Victor's amazing job. For this writer, however, there is no doubt that Dorati's is the best recorded performance of the music, despite the differences in sound. The difference, incidentally, is one of quantity rather than of quality.

RCA Victor supplies excellent notes by that eminent Berliozian, Jacques Barzun; and, in keeping with the fantastic nature of the music, the jacket art features a two-headed girl *avec trois yeux et quatre mamelles. C'est formidable!* W.

29 Classics You Should Know. 6-12" discs in album (*CAMDEN CFL-103) \$10.98.

CONTENTS: *Rosenkavalier Suite* (R. Strauss); *William Tell—Overture* (Rossini); *Overture Solennelle "1812"* (Tchaikovsky); *Finlandia* (Sibelius); *Marche Slav* (Tchaikovsky); *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6* (Liszt); *The Moldau* (Smetana); *Peer Gynt Suites Nos. 1 & 2* (Grieg); *Hansel and Gretel—Dream Pantomime* (Humperdinck); *Capriccio Italien* (Tchaikovsky); *Night on Bare Mountain* (Mossorgsky); *L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2* (Bizet); *Sorcerer's Apprentice* (Dukas); *Capriccio Espagnol* (Rimsky-Korsakov); *Méphisto Waltz* (Liszt); *Slavonic Dances, Op. 46* (Dvořák); *Les Préludes* (Liszt); *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (Strauss); *Orpheus in Hades—Overture* (Offenbach); *Salome—Dance of the Seven Veils* (R. Strauss); *Danse Macabre* (Saint-Saëns).

Due to the extreme shortage of space in our little bulletin we have not covered very many Camden records, since nearly all of them are transfers from older 78 rpm records and have been issued before. Nevertheless, here is an item which should have a wide appeal—particularly since it is most suitable as a gift for that youngster who is first evincing an interest in classical music, for here are fine performances of twenty-nine best-loved classical works.

Readers familiar with Camden records know that they are great bargains at \$2 per record; and they also know that in order to achieve this low price, RCA Victor had to issue them using fictitious names for the orchestras involved. In the present set you will find eight different orchestras, and we thought you might like to know who they really are: Globe—

National Symphony Orchestra; Warwick—Philadelphia Orchestra; Star—Hollywood Bowl Orchestra; Sussex—Indianapolis Symphony; Festival—Boston Pops Orchestra; Carlyle—Czech Philharmonic; Stratford—London Philharmonic; Cromwell—Cincinnati Orchestra; and Centennial—Boston Symphony.

Reproduction, considering the price, is more than satisfactory; the works, as listed in the heading, are complete.

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46. And **Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 2, Op. 55.** One side, and **Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1.** And **Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5035) \$4.98.

Here's a disc destined for the best-seller lists! Four of the most popular numbers ever written on one LP disc by the renowned Philadelphia Orchestra. DEALERS: Better stock heavily on this item!

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19. One side, and **Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58.** Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5037) \$4.98.

The famous team of Serkin, Ormandy, and the Philadelphia Orchestra has now recorded all five of the Beethoven *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra*. There are those who feel that this is a combination of artists hard to better as far as Beethoven Concertos are concerned, and your reviewer is one of them. It is not claimed that other recordings are inferior, but we doubt that any other recordings have any perceptible margin of superiority. Of the many famous pianists who have recorded one or more of the Beethoven Concertos, none has a more consistently high score than Serkin for the entire five works. This is certainly a notable series.

The No. 2 is really Beethoven's first Piano Concerto, after the student work of 1784. It is generally a light and bouncy work, a bit Mozartean in the opening movement. Serkin gives it a definite Beethoven hue rather than a Mozartean glossing over. There is exceptional strength in this first movement that is most impressive, and this is accomplished without overblowing the thing out of proportion. The graceful second movement and dashing rondo finale are masterfully performed. The No. 4 is an especial favorite of ours, and hearing Serkin perform it was a pleasure. The quiet, insistent urgency of the first movement (quite an unusual first movement) making its points with less hammering than usual, are realized magnificently by Serkin. This is a great reading of a great Concerto. Ormandy and the orchestra provide a pair of accompaniments that are beyond reproach, and Columbia has captured the whole with reproduction that is

superb in quality of piano tone, balance, and perspective. Both of these performances on one disc makes this an exceptional value. S.

Brahms: Concerto in D, Op. 77. Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1903) \$3.98.

A new recording of the Brahms *Violin Concerto* was long overdue in these high fidelity days. Here it is, with accompaniment by the Chicago Orchestra under Reiner, with very wide range reproduction. Heifetz, as an artist, seeks the ultimate in perfection of playing and interpretation. His artistry is immense, and his technique quite phenomenal, in an age when technical proficiency seems to have no limit. No one, certainly, who has committed this work to discs digs into it with more fierce determination, more gusto, and more iron-clad purpose than Heifetz. The result is a blazing performance that will satisfy many a person who seeks a good recording of this work, and it will surely please Heifetz' many followers.

We are unwilling to recommend this performance without reservation. As an individual, at least, this reviewer, feels that the whole thing is so terrifically wound up that the beauty of the music is often squeezed out by the tightness of the performance. When it comes to putting the screws down on this reading, brother Reiner can apply the pressure with equal vigor. This is no race; these boys see eye to eye on the whole matter; but it is a reading that sacrifices much to the technical side. The reproduction has a rather rough edge; it is either too revealing or else contains a sizzle and metallic quality inherent in the processing. That is the way it sounded to us most of the time—on the same phonograph that yielded lovely tone for RCA's new "Pathétique."

The many fine qualities of this set should not be overlooked by those interested in a Heifetz reading of this work. The above remarks may be considered by those who would compare this one with Oistrakh (*D-DL-9754) or Milstein (*CL-P-8271), to say nothing of several others listed in the LP catalogs. The balance between poetry and technique must remain a matter of personal taste. S.

Chausson: Concerto in D for Violin, Piano and String Quartet, Op. 21. Zino Francescatti (violin), Robert Casadesus (piano) and the Guilet Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4998) \$4.98.

This unusual concerto has had two previous recordings (Kaufman-Balsam and Heifetz-Sanroma), both excellent but both outclassed by the present version, especially in the reproduction department. Chausson called this work a concerto, but he had in mind the older meaning of the word, a mingling of the instruments rather than an opposition of forces. Messrs. Francescatti (he of the large tone) and Casadesus exhibit a rapport here which, when

caught by the very fine Guilets, produces a truly wonderful performance.

The Concerto is in four movements: Calme, Sicilienne (pas vite), Grave and Très Animé. The ensemble fairly glides from point to point through them, spilling the lovely melodies as they go, so that you come to the end wishing to start all over again. A perfectly fascinating work, the satisfaction from which is as much due to the very excellent artists as from the work itself. Warmly recommended.

Tavares: Concerto in Brazilian Forms, Op. 105, No. 2. One side, and **Paderewski: Fantasia Polonaise, Op. 19.** Felicja Blumenthal (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1104) \$3.98.

Weill: Concerto for Violin and Winds, Op. 12. Anahid Ajemian (violin) with MGM Wind Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. One and one-half sides, and **Webern: (4) Pieces for Violin and Piano, Op. 7.** Anahid Ajemian (violin) and Maro Ajemian (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3179) \$3.98.

Tavares' piano concerto, called *Concerto in Brazilian Forms*, serves to show that another serious composer is operating in Brazil besides Villa-Lobos. Hekel Tavares may not have, on the basis of this example, the originality of his better known compatriot; but Tavares can create music that is at once appealing, clothed in beauty, and able to sustain interest. He has taken the standard style, formula, and profile of the romantic piano concerto and given it a coloring which is evocative of his country. The least that could be said of the results is that it is pleasant music; the most that might be said is that it deserves to be heard around the country on our concert programs. Felicja Blumenthal, now a naturalized Brazilian, finds Tavares' Concerto congenial material and plays it beautifully, with a resoundingly fine accompaniment by Fistoulari. Miss Blumenthal is also heard in another first recording, the long rhapsodical *Fantasia Polonaise* by Paderewski. This is a very Lisztian and rather pompous work that undoubtedly "brought down the house" when the distinguished pianist played it; but it holds less interest today. Fistoulari provides the accompaniment. Reproduction is good.

Kurt Weill's *Concerto for Violin and Wind Orchestra* will curl the hair of most folks, who will immediately pronounce it a modern monstrosity that sounds more like cats fighting on the back fence than like music. If modern music is your dish, this one will prove pleasing. It was written in 1924, and things were rather rough in Germany about that time, we guess, so it reflects the times, or something. We should add that Miss Ajemian does nobly with this diabolic work; and, of course, Izler Solomon is always a good hand at unravelling modern scores.

Anton Webern's four pieces for violin give us a slightly different slant on atonality, but it is still atonality; and how closely these pieces are related to what most of us consider music is something else again. The reproduction of both these works is extraordinary in detail. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Brahms: Sonata No. 1 in G, Op. 78. One side, and **Brahms: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 100.** Szymon Goldberg (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9720) \$3.98.

Prokofiev: Sonata in D, Op. 94. One side, and **Handel: Sonata No. 4 in D, Op. 1.** And **Vitali: Chaconne.** Nathan Milstein (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8315) \$4.98.

The Goldberg-Balsam versions of the two Brahms Sonatas will be welcome to collectors not desiring the complete set of three (plus the Dietrich-Schumann-Brahms *F. A. E. Sonata*) recently issued by Columbia (*C-SL-202, TNR Nov. '54). The surfaces on our Decca record were glassy smooth, and the performances leave little to be desired.

Nathan Milstein has been working overtime since he joined Capitol, to the benefit both of himself and of the record collector; for he is undoubtedly one of the finest fiddlers around. His reading both of the Handel and the Prokofiev Sonatas is sound and evidence real musical values; this is the only high fidelity recording of the Handel available at present, and is the logical choice if you are considering this work; there are two other good readings of the Prokofiev: Ricci (*L-LL-770) and Stern (*C-ML-4734). The *Chaconne* of Vitali (1665-1711) belongs to the school which profoundly influenced Handel; it therefore makes an excellent filler for the Handel side, for it would sound incongruous if it immediately followed the Prokofiev *Sonata*.

Franck: Sonata in A. One side, and **Fauré: Sonata No. 1 in A, Op. 13.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9716) \$3.98.

Fauré: Sonata No. 1 in A, Op. 13. One side, and **Debussy: Sonata in G.** And **Debussy—arr. Roques: La Plus que Lente.** And **Debussy—arr. Hartmann: Il Pleure dans mon Coeur.** And **Debussy—arr. Debussy: Minstrels.** Jan Tomasow (violin) and Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-464) \$4.98.

Debussy: Sonata for Flute, Viola and Harp (1915). Julius Baker (flute), Lillian Fuchs (viola) and Laura Newell (harp). One side, and **Roussel: Trio for Flute, Viola and Violoncello, Op. 40.** Julius Baker (flute), Lillian Fuchs (viola) and Harry Fuchs (violoncello). And **Debussy: Syrinx, 1912.** Julius Baker (flute solo). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9777) \$3.98.

Three fine discs devoted to French chamber music

this month. Dreamy music easy to listen to but hard to pay attention to—relaxing and soothing. Limited space precludes detailed description, but we are glad to report that performances and reproduction are well up to today's standards on all three discs. Worthy of especial mention is Julius Baker's version of the flute student's headache, *Syrinx*; not quite up to Kincaid (*C-ML-4339), but a very worthwhile performance, all the same.

Kodaly: Quartet No. 1, Op. 2. Roth String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-80004) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

Shostakovich: Quartet No. 4, Op. 83. The Tchaikovsky Quartet. One side, and **Shostakovich: Quartet No. 5, Op. 92.** The Beethoven Quartet. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6021) \$4.98.

This performance by the Roth String Quartet is the first recording of Kodaly's Quartet No. 1. This is one of Kodaly's earliest works, but is written in the lyrical and colorful style which was to characterize his later brilliant orchestral scores. The music is cast in the classical four-movement pattern and based on distinctively Hungarian thematic material.

Two more LP firsts are the pair of Shostakovich Quartets on the Vanguard disc, revealing an entirely new Shostakovich in the realm of chamber music. Here is evidence of the composer's deep concern for the troubled peace following the terrible World War II—the anguish aroused by the shadow of an atomic war, yet the thread of faith that human qualities will, somehow, prevail so that peoples will not permit their own destruction.

Mercury's single microphone technique for recording chamber groups is absolutely perfect; the Vanguard disc was evidently processed from some of the best Russian tapes to come our way.

French Moderns. The Berkshire Woodwind Ensemble and Assisting Artists. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN UNLP-1005) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Suite dans le Gout Espagnol* (Roland-Manuel); *Suite (d'après Corette)* (Milhaud); *Caprice sur des Airs Danois et Russes* (Saint-Saëns); *Rapsodie* (Honegger); *Trio* (Poulenc).

Ibert: (3) Pièces brèves. And **Hindemith: Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2.** One side, and **Milhaud: La Cheminée du Roi René.** And **Milhaud: (2) Esquisses.** Wind Quintet of l'Orchestre de la Radiodiffusion française. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35079TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35079) \$4.98.

French chamber music primarily for woodwinds is the feature of these two discs. All of the composers on the Unicorn record are well-known except Alexis Roland-Manuel (1891-), a professor at the Paris Conservatory and (since 1949) president of the UNESCO Council on Music. The

present unpretentious *Suite in the Spanish Style* dates from 1938 and embodies a series of typically Spanish dances, handled with French subtlety. The work fits in well with three of the other four on this disc, the sole maverick being the Saint-Saëns *Caprice*. Saint-Saëns was dismayed at the turns music was taking in the hands of his younger colleagues, and on this disc the *Caprice* serves as an anchor to windward, reminding the listener from whence sprang the music which followed by "Les Six" and others. A disc for the *avant-garde* of chamber music lovers, well performed and featuring excellent reproduction.

The Angel disc serves chiefly to demonstrate the superb playing of the Wind Quintet of the French Radio Orchestra, since all of the works, save Milhaud's *Deux Esquisses*, are adequately represented elsewhere on LP records. Matters of coupling always enter into one's choice when one is interested in one or two of these works; and since that choice would be personal, we can report only that, in addition to magnificent performances, the purchaser of the Angel disc will not be let down reproduction-wise.

CHORAL



Spelman: The Vigil of Venus. Ilona Steingruber (soprano), Otto Wiener (baritone) with the Vienna Academy Chamber Choir directed by Ferdinand Grossman and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3085) \$3.98.

Timothy Mather Spelman is a name that will probably be new to most phonophiles, so perhaps a brief biographical note would not be out of order. He was born in Brooklyn in 1891, graduated from Harvard in 1913 and went to Europe on a scholarship. World War I drove him back to this country, where he served as assistant director of the Band Musicians Training in the War Department. He has written in many forms: symphony, opera, string quartet; there is a symphonic poem, *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*; a suite for orchestra, *Sunday Papers*; and a ballet, *The Princess who was Bored*. Most of his music has been premiered abroad, although the Boston Symphony Orchestra gave the premiere of *Saint's Days* and Howard Hansen and the Rochester Orchestra gave the work under discussion, *The Vigil of Venus*, its first American performance in 1933, some two years after its world premiere in Paris.

The Vigil of Venus is a poem "celebrating the coming of Spring, the awakening of Nature to new Life and to Love." This is an ambitious program, and it would have been a distinct pleasure to be able to report that the *Vigil of Venus* was, if not a masterpiece, at least tuneful and interesting. But, alas, it is "made music," à la Hindemith; there is very little in the way of tunes and even less in the musical idea department. The chorus and soloists are adequate, as is the orchestra, but all this energy

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 † Indicates 45 rpm.

is being spent on a piece of music that struck the writer as being stillborn.

This is definitely a disc to be heard first. The recorded sound is good, there are notes and the English text of the Latin words—not too much help, but better than nothing. W.

The Little Singers of Paris. The Little Singers of Paris directed by Msgr. F. Mailet. 1-10" disc (*ANG-64024) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: (2) 13th Century Noël; Chanson Joyeuse de Noël; Noël from Savoy; A la Claire Fontaine; L'Alouette; Manre, en la Puerta; Schlafe, mein Prinzchen; Adieu Foulards.

Les Petits Chanteurs à la Croix de Bois or, as they are known in this country, The Little Singers of Paris, consist of 30 voices: boy-sopranos, boy-altos, tenors and basses. The organization was founded in 1907, and the original intent was to form a choir that would travel from place to place to bring to the people the splendors of Gregorian chant and Palestrinian music. Now, over 7,000 concerts later, secular music has been added, and this disc has been issued to commemorate the choir's recent tour of the United States and Canada.

Les Petits Chanteurs are practically the sole support of their school for underprivileged boys, numbering from 60 to 70. Milhaud has called the school "a miracle of faith, tenacity, enthusiasm and talent;" we can speak only for the talent, which is nothing short of exceptional. There is a hardy group of collectors of boy choir records; they should not miss this one.

Folk Songs of the New World. Roger Wagner Chorale directed by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8324) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Black Is the Color; I've Been Working on the Railroad; Wayfaring Stranger; Cindy; I Wonder As I Wander; On Top of Old Smoky; Shenandoah; Skip to Mah Lou; He's Gone Away; Drunken Sailor; Streets of Laredo; Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child; Blue Tail Fly.*

Last November we reviewed an LP disc by the excellent Roger Wagner Chorale doing some songs by Stephen Foster; we recall that we praised this disc very highly, being quite surprised that it was so good. Now we must ascribe some reason for the fact that the present disc doesn't strike our fancy. For some reason the Foster songs sounded (and still sound) good to us. But the tricky arrangements of the present folk songs that Mr. Wagner has his group run through, for us, take all the spirit out of the songs. This sort of thing won't take such sophisticated treatment. For example, if any of you have the Victor disc of *Sea Shanties* by Leonard Warren (*V-LM-1168), you will find oceans of difference in the effect of *Drunken Sailor* and *Shenandoah*; Warren is properly "earthy," yet most musical and stirring.

OPERA



Puccini: Madama Butterfly (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Orchestra and Chorus of the Opera House, Rome, conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6121) \$11.98.

Cio-Cio-San Victoria de los Angeles (s)
Suzuki Anna Maria Canali (ms)
Pinkerton Giuseppe di Stefano (t)
Kate Pinkerton Maria Huder (ms)
Sharpless Tito Gobbi (bt)
Goro Renato Ercolani (t)
Prince Yamadori Arturo la Porta (bs-bt)
The Bonze Bruno Sbalchiero (bs)

It is usually dangerous to deal in superlatives when reviewing records, more so now than in bygone years, because in a month or two one is very liable to have to eat one's words, since records are issued with what can best be described as witless profusion these days. Nonetheless, this new recording of *Madama Butterfly* is such that superlatives are the only words that come to mind. The three principals could scarcely be equalled, let alone surpassed, these days; and while recorded sound has enhanced many a voice, the voices of Victoria de los Angeles, Giuseppe di Stefano and Tito Gobbi ring out here in a manner that makes one almost believe we are enjoying a second "golden age" of opera. Granted that it takes more than one swallow to make a spring (although the new *Così fan Tutte* reviewed elsewhere in this issue is another case in point) there is some of the finest singing ever captured on records in this electric and passionate performance of *Madama Butterfly*.

Victoria de los Angeles, in the title role, brings rare sympathy and understanding to the part of the little geisha girl. Vocally she displays a warm, lyric soprano that rises to great dramatic heights in the first act duet. The almost hackneyed *Un bel di vedremo* sounds fresh and new, for it is sung with genuine conviction and emotion. The finale and the events leading up to it are both dramatic and musical. As Lt. Pinkerton, Giuseppe di Stefano turns in one of the best of his many superb recorded performances. Curiously, he almost makes the character sympathetic—he realizes that Puccini's (or rather Belasco's) hero is, to put it mildly, a bit of a "heel," yet at the close of the opera (*Addio fiorito asil*) the genuine heartbreak he conveys makes up for some of the Lieutenant's moral deficiencies. The wonderful duet at the close of the first act is the occasion for some of di Stefano's best singing in the opera. There remains Tito Gobbi, one of today's best baritones. He is a tower of strength as Sharpless, and his singing is in the great tradition of opera—his is an outstanding performance. Lack of space precludes any discussion of the other members of the

cast. It must suffice to state that they are all excellent.

Finally one comes to Gianandrea Gavazzeni's contribution to the success of this recorded performance. This is Mo. Gavazzeni's second complete opera on LP and he demonstrates here, as in the Cetra *L'Elisir d'Amore*, his sound musicianship and his ability to control both orchestra and singers. This *Madama Butterfly* would not be the glorious performance it is without his firm hand at the helm. This is one of the truly great recorded operas—it has no competition. W.

Mozart: *Così fan Tutte* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35164/6TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3522C/L) \$15.98.

Fiordiligi Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s)
Dorabella Nan Merriman (ms)
Ferrando Léopold Simoneau (t)
Guglielmo Rolando Panerai (bt)
Despina Lisa Otto (s)
Don Alfonso Sesto Bruscantini (bs)

It has become commonplace, in many quarters, to dismiss *Così fan Tutti* as a light, frothy work, something sort of beneath Mozart's dignity, or to decry its "frivolous" and "degrading" libretto. Both attitudes are totally wrong; on the contrary, *Così fan Tutte* is one of Mozart's most inspired scores; it is one of his finest and rarest works; but, unfortunately, it has not been given to many people to hear a performance that does it justice. The early Victor 78 rpm recording of *Così fan Tutte*, made at Glyndebourne, was a superb performance but broken into its many sides it could not make its full effect. Even later, when transferred to LP (TNR Mar. '53), one had the continuity, but the sound still left something to be desired. An early LP on Period (now Remington) was poor (TNR Sept. '52) while the English version by the Met on Columbia (TNR Jan. '53) also left this writer cold.

Now, however, Angel Records has made available for everyone a recorded performance of this most perfect of Mozart's operas that is breath-taking in its beauty. As the two sisters, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Nan Merriman sing with feeling, understanding and great vocal purity. Miss Schwarzkopf's singing of the taxing role of Fiordiligi is a magnificent job, while Miss Merriman's Dorabella is also deserving of the highest praise. They remain in character throughout the whole work, never failing to add the right touch either of comedy or pathos. As the gentleman, Léopold Simoneau and Rolando Panerai are little short of superb; here, too, one is confronted with virtually perfect artistry. The parts of Don Alfonso and Despina are in extremely capable hands—nothing but praise for Lisa Otto and Sesto Bruscantini.

Herbert von Karajan's direction is a sheer delight;

appropriate *tempi*, exquisite phrasing and carefully controlled dynamics are the hallmarks of his interpretation or, rather one should say, re-creation. One hears *Così fan Tutte* anew and realizes, with the critic of the last century, that while "on the stage there are two Italian coquettes who smile and deceive—in the music, no one lies and no one laughs; we smile all the more, even tears are neighbors to a smile." A more modern writer with less insight but more social consciousness has said Mozart was pleading "for tenderness, for humane compassion and for an enlightened and philosophic toleration of human weakness." Each statement is correct, the opera is unquestionably a masterpiece and, as recorded and performed here, reaches heights seldom encountered in the theatre, let alone on records. W.

Puccini: *Manon Lescaut* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Orchestra and Chorus of the Opera House, Rome, conducted by Jonel Perlea. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6116) \$11.98.

Manon Lescaut Licia Albanese (s)
Lescaut Robert Merrill (bt)
des Grieux Jussi Bjoerling (t)
Geronte de Ravoire Franco Calabrese (bs)
Edmondo Mario Carlin (t)
Innkeeper Plinio Clabassi (bs)
Hair Dresser Anna Maria Rota (ms)

This venture by RCA Victor represents the fourth LP recording of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, an opera that could not exactly be called one of the most popular in the repertoire. For this occasion Victor obtained the services of Albanese, Bjoerling and Merrill and, with the resources of the Rome Opera under Jonel Perlea, committed the resultant performance to tape.

Now with singers of the reputation of Albanese, Bjoerling and Merrill one would ordinarily expect some fireworks; but no—either everyone was having an off day or was out of sorts, for the performance is a dreary one with only occasional spots of animation. Such a state of affairs can be partially blamed on the conductor (certainly he does not seem to push matters along with very much authority), but some of the blame must also be charged to the singers, for this writer is reasonably sure that if they had put their backs to it and their hearts and voices into it, a great deal more could have been made of Puccini's well knit, if not always inspired, score.

Miss Albanese cannot sing poorly, but she has sung with more expression and feeling. Bjoerling has always seemed wooden to this writer, and wooden he is as des Grieux. The voice seems smaller and more strained here, too. Merrill sort of shouts his way through the music—not a very impressive performance.

Jonel Perlea is new to this column, and his performance is not the sort that sets one hoping for more operas under his direction. Good sound, at-

tractive packaging and a complete libretto. This is one for the fans of the principal singers. W.

Operatic Recital. Christel Goltz (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9778) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Salome*—Monologue (final scene); *Fidelio*—Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin (Act I); *Oberon*—Ozean, du Ungeheuer! (Act II); *The Taming of the Shrew*—Die Kraft versagt (Act IV); *Alceste*—Où suis-je? . . . Non, ce n'est point un sacrifice & Divinités du Styx (Act I).

Berlioz: La Damnation de Faust (excerpts). One side, and **Massenet: Werther** (excerpts). (Sung in French). Raoul Jobin (tenor) and Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1154) \$3.98.

For one of the most exciting vocal records of the year, your servant is happy to recommend this Decca disc of operatic arias sung by Christel Goltz. One can dismiss the *Finale* to *Salome* very briefly—her two complete recorded performances, one for Oceanic (TNR Feb. '51) and the other for London (TNR Nov. '54) have been favorably reviewed, and the present version is as fine as its predecessors.

Much more intriguing and, because they are the only numbers Miss Goltz has recorded other than *Salome*, of much more musical interest are the "standard" arias from *Fidelio* and *Oberon*, plus three "not-so-standard" arias, one from *The Taming of the Shrew* and two from *Alceste*. The *Fidelio* and *Oberon* performances rank among the best on records; they are very thrilling and theatrically convincing. Both these arias were issued earlier (TNR Oct. '53) but the newer processing of the original tapes has enhanced the fidelity considerably. The aria from Goetz' half-forgotten opera is charming, a happy contrast to the more dramatic music that preceded it. The two *Alceste* excerpts are stunningly sung with a sure sense of style and consummate musicianship. Miss Goltz is fortunate in her conductors. Robert Heger does all but the Gluck arias; then Ferenc Fricsay takes over. Her support in both instances is fine. Good sound, texts and excellent commentaries make the disc one to be recommended on all counts.

The London record of arias and duets from *La Damnation de Faust* and *Werther* features tame—almost wooden—singing on the part of Mlle. Kolassi and M. Jobin and routine direction by Anatole Fistoulari. Neither work can stand such summary and cavalier treatment, but the Massenet suffers more because of its lack of any real musical tissue. There are a few flashes of inspiration in each performance (which are quickly suppressed); these only serve to illuminate and accentuate the drabness of the rest of the presentation. The sound is mediocre, too.

W.

VOCAL

Schumann: Myrthen, Op. 25. (Sung in German). Petre Munteanu (tenor) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18006) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18006) \$4.98.

This cycle of twenty-six songs with the general title of *Myrthen* (Myrtle) was composed by Schumann as a wedding present for his bride. They date from the year 1840 and are the second group of *lieder* he published. The texts were drawn from a varied group of poets including Goethe, Heine and Robert Burns, to mention but three.

Musically speaking they are all of a high order, among Schumann's finest. Several of them have achieved a widespread popularity, notably *Widmung*, *Die Nussbaum* and *Die Lotusblume*. The others, while not so well known (indeed, some of them are undoubtedly receiving their very first recording), are excellent—Schumann was not as sentimental at this time or, perhaps, his sentiment did not spill over into the maudlin so readily as it did later.

Petre Munteanu sings them all with fine feeling and in a restrained manner that adds much to the listener's enjoyment. His voice is a manly tenor that is capable of coloring, and his understanding of the texts is admirably conveyed. Franz Holetschek is the extremely able accompanist.

Since Westminster, in a fit of economy, supplied only the low priced version of the set for the reviewer, this writer is unable to state whether texts are supplied; but, on the basis of Westminster's fine regard for such niceties in the past, one assumes they are included with the factory-sealed package. The recorded sound is fine.

W.

Noel Coward at Las Vegas. Noel Coward in an actual performance at the Desert Inn, Las Vegas (Nev.), with Carlton Hayes and his Orchestra and Peter Matz (piano). 1-12" disc (*CML-5063) \$4.98.

Goddard Lieberman, in his wonderful notes on the jacket of this LP, introduces Noel Coward thusly: "Mr. Noel Coward has not yet, as far as I know, made any contribution to the science of nuclear physics. Indeed . . . I am quite sure that all of us would have a much more cheerful feeling about the atomic age if he had." Mr. Lieberman goes on: "Mr. Coward must be proclaimed, hurraed and celebrated as 'the great professional.' He possesses, more than any other artist I know, that indestructible quality of knowing his job so well that even the smallest detail is polished to its full potential . . ."

And there lies the Great One's secret. For, though he gargles his way through some 18 of his best known songs (including *Uncle Harry*, *Mad*

Dogs and Englishmen, *Alice Is at It Again*, *Let's Do It* (Cole Porter), and *The Party's Over Now*) on this disc, he injects that Coward spark, interspersed with that pointed Coward patter, to make a record much to be desired by his many fans. The laughter of the audience on this disc doesn't spoil it at all—rather quite the opposite, much to our surprise.

The Gentle Art of Chordsmanship. The Augmented Eight. 1-10" disc (*McINTOSH MP-5001) \$3.50.

CONTENTS: *Louisville Lou*; *Down in Jungle Town*; *Mandy*; *George Jones*; *Here She Comes*; *I Ain't Got Nobody*; *Miss Otis Regrets*; *Way Down in My Heart*; *Princess Papuli*; *I Don't Know Why*; *St. Louis Blues*; *When I See All the Lovin' That They Waste on Babies*; *Lindy*; *Slow Motion*; *You'll Come Back*.

In 1950 ten recent graduates of several Eastern colleges got together to sing for fun; later they became twenty strong, although as they married, raised families and got jobs, not all could get together at one time, as a rule. For this McIntosh disc fourteen of these chaps got together to demonstrate the "Gentle Art of Chordsmanship," offering a nice variety to warm the cockles of the Barber-shop Quartet fan. Here is music for fun with a professional finish.

PIANO



Debussy: (12) Préludes (Book II). Walter Giese-king (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35249TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35249) \$4.98.

French Piano Music. Jean Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35261TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35261) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Les Tricotets*, *L'Enharmonique*, *Les Menuets*, *La Joyeuse*, *L'Egyptienne*, *La Triomphante* (Rameau); *La Bandoline*; *Le Dodo ou l'Amour au Berceau*, *Les Tricoteuses*, *Le Tic-Toc-Choc* (Couperin); *Improvisation No. 5 in A minor* (Poulenc); *La Tendre*, *La Moderne* (both from "5 Portraits de Jeunes Filles" (Françaix); *Valse Lente*, *Larghetto* (Tailleferré); *Sardane*, *Resonances "sur le nom de Claude Pasquier"*, *Toccata Op. 40* (Robert Casadesus).

Walter Giese-king has now two complete versions of both Book I and Book II of Debussy's *Préludes*: one for Columbia and the other for Angel. Both are excellent, but we cannot help observing that Angel is the better buy. Columbia's are \$4.98 for each Book; for the same price Angel gives you a factory-sealed disc, and if you don't care about this feature (plus excellent notes), you can get the Angel Standard Package (unsealed, no notes) for \$3.48.

28-year-old Jean Casadesus, son of Robert and Gaby, presents a well-varied selection of French piano music, both early and modern, including three works by Papa Robert. He is certainly a chip off the old block, and we predict a bright future for this young man.



ORGAN

Bach Organ Music. Albert Schweitzer, playing the organ at the Parish Church, Gunsbach, Alsace. 3-12" discs in box (*C-SL-223) \$17.85.

CONTENTS: *Toccatas and Fugues in D minor, E minor, A Minor, C, and C minor*. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5040) \$5.95.

Toccata and Fugue in D minor ("Dorian"); *Preludes and Fugues in A, F minor and B minor*. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5041) \$5.95.

Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor; *Prelude and Fugue in G*; (6) *Chorale Preludes*. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5042) \$5.95.

The organ playing of the great humanitarian, musician and Bach scholar, Albert Schweitzer, is beyond criticism and comparison with other organists. Putting it beyond comparison with other organists' performances is a difficult matter, for we have all heard other men play these same works; some of the more familiar numbers have been played many, many times by our most renowned virtuosos. But it is necessary to approach the Schweitzer performances with an open mind and without preconceived notions if we wish to savor their mellowness and appreciate their loftiness. It is unnecessary to compare technical prowess with the blazing virtuosity of our younger organists here and abroad. The essence of these Schweitzer discs is the interpretive value they have. They also offer a soothing respite from the fast pace of this mechanized age, from the steel-trap efficiency which plagues our lives and to which we are all slaves in this generation. This is music that forces the listener to sit back, relax, close his eyes, and think of things which transcend the efficiency and regimentation of minor details every minute of the day.

We would wager anything that if Schweitzer had the fleet fingers of Virgil Fox or of Biggs, he would play all of this music just about as he does on these discs. A trifle more steadiness and accuracy might result, but not an appreciable difference in tempo or architecture of the works as they unfold. The inherent greatness of the man at the console is revealed just as clearly as the genius of the master who wrote the music.

Just as one cannot really "see" and appreciate many paintings at a distance of only two or three feet—they must be seen from a greater distance properly to blend and deliver the true picture—so cannot Schweitzer's organ playing be heard on a note by note and measure by measure basis with

close scrutiny. Those who will listen to these performances properly can derive an experience not to be duplicated by other playings of the same music.

Columbia is to be congratulated for issuing this monumental series. Whatever flaws may be woven into the fabric are completely eclipsed by the effect of the whole cloth. These discs are most certainly not recommended unreservedly, as we often do in these columns. They are recommended to those who can appreciate their content, to those who can listen to Schweitzer play the *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*, the *Passacaglia*, the *Prelude and Fugue in G*, and the *Prelude and Fugue in E minor* (often called "The Cathedral," here referred to as the "little") and realize that all in music and in this age is not necessarily speed and efficiency. For the student there are many lessons in clarity, execution, style, transparency, and the like. For many of us there is a lesson in relaxing and considering matters of true value.

S.



BAND

French and American Military Marches. La Garde Républicaine Band conducted by F. I. Brun. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35260TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35260) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *La Marseillaise*; *Le Grenadier du Caucase*; *Salute au 85ème*; *Le Brave*; *Sonnez Clairons*; *Défilé de la Garde Républicaine*; *Saint-Cyr*; *Trocadéro* (French). *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, *Washington Post*, *El Capitan*, *The High School Cadets*, the *Thunderer* (Sousa); *National Emblem* (Bagley); *The Star-Spangled Banner* (arr. Duport) (American).

The *Garde Républicaine* Band is certainly one of the world's great military bands, and at the time of their concert tour of the States in the fall of 1953 Angel issued a 12-inch LP (*ANG-35051) of French military marches played by this outstanding organization; it escaped the notice of our editor but, fortunately, not that of the avid collector of march records. The present disc will, we do not doubt, prove even more saleable because of the seven American marches (including the National Anthem) and the *Marseillaise* which appear on it. This, without a doubt, is the greatest band we've ever heard, recorded or otherwise.



DICTION

Thomas: Under Milk Wood. Hugh Griffith with an all-Welsh supporting cast. Produced by Douglas Cleverdon. 2-12" discs (*WEST-SWN-18018/9) \$7.96. 2-12" factory-sealed discs in folder (*WEST-WN-2202) \$9.98.

The sudden death of Dylan Thomas in 1953, shortly after his 39th birthday, saddened the many persons who looked forward to each new poem he

wrote; but we hope they will be as delighted as we were to learn that *Under Milk Wood* "A Play for Voices" had been completed, albeit only about a month before the poet's passing. The BBC broadcast the play, produced by Douglas Cleverdon, twice in January 1954, and it is to be presumed that the present recording was taken from one of these broadcasts.

Dylan (pronounced "Dih'-lan") Thomas was a poet of great talent, and he was especially apt at probing under the skin, as it were, of his subject, displaying its entrails, regardless of whether they were pretty or ugly. The plot of *Under Milk Wood* concerns a mythical Welsh town which contains so many eccentrics and individualists that the lunatic asylum cannot hold them all; whereupon the sane world declares the entire town to be an insane area, and all traffic is diverted from it. Captain Cat, a blind sea captain played by Hugh Griffith, becomes spokesman for the indignant townspeople, and he demands that their insanity be placed on trial; Captain Cat will be counsel for the defense, and the townspeople will be their own witnesses. The trial is held, and the closing speech for the prosecution consists of a full and minute description of the ideally sane town; and when the townspeople hear what a sane town would be like, they immediately withdraw their defense and plea to be cordoned off from the sane world as soon as possible.

Mr. Thomas introduces us to each character in this mythical town; he spares us no one, from the town harlot to the Rev. Eli Jenkins, and they are depicted under the glare of the poet's klieg lights so that every wrinkle, every eyelash are revealed in all their nakedness. The dramatic impact of this recording is great, indeed—as great as it would be on the stage, since there is little action, the characters themselves painting their own pictures. The whole cast is obviously dedicated to its task, and shows thorough training and delicate direction.

Westminster describes the package containing these discs as its "radically new innovation" (are the records in the shape of round circles?), the discs being factory-sealed in pliofilm bags which are a permanent part of the folder. Their care in packaging has resulted in records with unblemished surfaces and perfect reproduction; the whole offering must be considered an unqualified success. J.

The Unashamed Accompanist. Gerald Moore (speaking and piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35262TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35262) \$4.98.

It was Sir Landon Ronald who advised Gerald Moore to concentrate his talents on accompanying rather than on solo playing; and the world is surely the richer for it, for Mr. Moore went on to become the outstanding and most sought-after accompanist of our day. On this record, in his drily witty way, Gerald Moore explains to us, with examples, some of the problems of the accompanist. We got many

laughs from his monologue; for example, Mr. Moore explains that it is extremely important for the accompanist to understand fully every word of the song being sung, so that his accompaniment may reflect the mood and words of the song. "In fact," he goes on, "I am very often requested to accompany singers singing American songs, and I invariably get one of my friends to translate these into English before I attempt my part."

Gerald Moore has written a book, *The Unashamed Accompanist* (Macmillan Co.), which amplifies many of the points mentioned on this disc. Your understanding of singing and of the performance of songs will be extended when you hear the comments on this disc; and you will be introduced to a very witty fellow who is a truly dedicated artist.

Les Poètes Maudits. Jean Louis Barrault (reading). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1010) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Le Jet d'Eau, Elévation, Recueillement, Le Crépuscule du Matin, Préface à Arsène Houssaye, Le Confitoreur de l'Artiste, Les Yeux des Pauvres, Un Hémisphère dans une Chevelure* (Baudelaire); *Le Dormeur du Val, Roman, Comédie en Trois Baisers, Aube, Alchime du Verbe, Les Assis* (Rimbaud).

Not much need be said about this disc: it is only for the French scholar, some few of whom may wish readings of these erotic poems by the "accursed poets," Baudelaire and Rimbaud. M. Barrault lives every wretched moment of these works of execrable taste. Our sole reason for even listing the disc is to warn parents of children who may be studying French in high school that this is NOT the sort of thing to buy for them to accompany their studying.

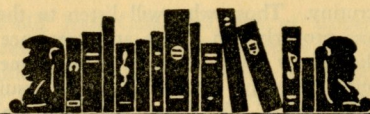
MISCELLANEOUS

The Harp in High Fidelity. Carlos Salzedo (harp). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-80003) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

CONTENTS: Variations on "The Harmonious Blacksmith" (Handel—arr. Salzedo); Giga (Corelli—arr. Salzedo); Menuet d'Amour (Massenet—arr. Salzedo); Scintillation, Ballade, Petite Valse, La Désirade, Traipsin' thru Arkansas (Salzedo).

Carlos Salzedo, sprightly and peppery at 70 years of age, claims that most of the 9,000 harpists in this country are either his students, his "grand-students" or "great-grandstudents" (i.e., taught either by his students or his students' students). Whether or not this is true, there is no denying that Mr. Salzedo is one of the outstanding harpists living today, and he here presents a recital of his own works plus some of his better known arrangements.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Fabulous Phonograph. By Roland Gelatt. 320 pp. Illustrated. J. B. Lippincott Company (Philadelphia and New York). Price \$4.95.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, COSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esterline, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIGA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

A MOST UNUSUAL and interesting series of records has been announced by Decca, and the initial release from this series is now available. It is known as the Archive Production Series of the History of Music Division of the Deutsche Grammophon Gesellschaft; it will be of prime interest to musicologists and to collectors interested in musical chronology. The full story is told and the list of records available will be found in a twenty-page brochure, a limited supply of which the publisher of THE NEW RECORDS has obtained; those interested should send for a copy of this booklet, which will be sent gratis to any reader requesting one.

Briefly, the Archive Production has as its avowed purpose the preservation on discs of complete works written between 700 and 1800 A. D. Not an educational system nor limited to a restricted program, the works are selected whose beauty and vitality can still exert an immediate appeal to the music-lover of the present day. Works are performed in their complete authentic form, based on the original versions; they are performed faithfully to the original style, using historical instruments; interpretations are by highly qualified specialist performers in recordings of the highest standards using the latest technical developments. All are 12-inch discs, and the price of each is \$5.98.

The Archive Production has been divided into twelve research periods: (I) Gregorian Chant; (II) The Central Middle Ages (1100-1350); (III) The Early Renaissance (1350-1500); (IV) The High Renaissance (16th Cent.); (V) The Italian Siecento (17th Cent.); (VI) German Baroque Music (17th Cent.); (VII) Western Europe (1650-1750); (VIII) The Italian Settecento (18th Cent.); (IX) The Works of J. S. Bach (1685-1750);

(X) G. F. Handel (1685-1759); (XI) The German Pre-Classics (1700-1760); (XII) Mannheim & Vienna (1760-1800). Space precludes detailed descriptions of the discs (12 in number) in this first release; but as this is done very well in the brochure, we feel that it is necessary to state only that the artists, reproduction, and selection of works performed are all superb; Decca deserves a warm vote of thanks for initiating the series, and we wish it the commercial success it deserves.

The Birth of a Performance. Actual rehearsals and finished recorded performance by the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 2-12" discs in box (*CSL-224) \$10.

CONTENTS: Symphony No. 36 in C, K. 425 ("Linz") (Mozart).

NOTE: This unusual item, we feel, will create so much interest that we are removing it from its usual place in THE NEW RECORDS and according it a special position, in order that those interested will not overlook it. Ed.

If there is any collector of classical orchestral music who is not completely captivated with this set, we will be mighty surprised. Here is an experience that many of us long for—to attend an actual rehearsal by one of our greatest conductors. Now we have it on records, and we can hear it as often as we wish, and use it for study purposes. This particular rehearsal has unusual value, for it is the rehearsal of a group which was created for the purpose of recording and which had not played under Walter; it is not to be compared, for example, to a rehearsal of the New York Philharmonic, which is familiar with Walter and has played this music many times under him. This is not a brush-up rehearsal; it is right from scratch. To hear this remarkable man create a finished performance, shaping every bar, at times practically every note, develop the style, apply the polish and not lose the whole effect is just beyond description. This is, in a way, the most unusual album ever put before the public. We believe you will do well to listen to the last side first, which is the complete performance, just as it would be issued normally; then go back to the first disc and see how it was achieved.

What will surprise most folks is the fact that there is no bloodshed. Such a disgusting aura of glamor has been built around a certain renowned conductor for his baton-smashing rages and volcanic rehearsals that most persons would assume the average player should come to rehearsal in armor. None of this nonsense with Bruno Walter, whose warm, kindly, human, understanding personality is in evidence every minute. His rehearsals are just like his performances. We could write eight columns about this set, but the more we write, the more it will spoil your thrill on hearing it. Before one minute has passed you will be completely under Walter's spell.

A fine booklet of notes by Neville Cardus and the complete score of the symphony are included with the album. Incidentally, you can hear and understand every word spoken by Walter. Don't miss this set; it is a new and wonderful experience. S.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see TNR Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

NOTE: The **Current Market Price** of Westminster 4000- and 5000-series, 12-inch Haydn Society, L'Anthologie Sonore, and Urania LP's is \$2.99.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent

recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning November, 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (post-paid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66 (complete). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 3-12" discs in album (*ME-OL-3-103) \$22.95.

Current Market Price of this set: \$18.36.

Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66 (complete). Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, conducted by Robert Irving. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6034) \$7.98.

If you are buying on a matter of price, the Victor set is truly a fine value. This is a king-sized helping of the music, very nearly complete, well played and well recorded, with sufficient program notes.

Price aside, the Mercury set is not only luxuriously packaged, but the quality of the performance and the elegance of the reproduction are on a level not excelled, even in today's competitive market. The album housing these three discs is handsome, the booklet containing paintings and a detailed story is a masterpiece of art work. Record jackets and booklet are spiral bound into the padded album covers.

But it is the music that counts, and Mercury has a winner in that department too. Dorati and the orchestra just outdo themselves in a tour-de-force of orchestral playing that could garner nothing but the highest praise. Everything about this performance and recording is right, including the fact that it is the one and the only completely complete, nothing left out of the original score, recording. With their complete recordings of *Nutcracker* and *Swan Lake*, Dorati and Mercury now have a trilogy of which they can well be proud. Mercury deserves a lot of credit for sponsoring this undertaking and carrying it through so lavishly. What more can be said? You just have to see the package and hear the discs to be convinced that this release is practically in the heirloom class. We might suggest to those who wonder whether six sides of *The Sleeping Beauty* may not be too much that they just read Cyril Beaumont's text; they will become so absorbed with the story that six sides will seem necessary. His detailed description is the next best thing to being in the theatre, a model of clarity and beauty. S.

Bizet: Roma (Ballet). One side, and **Chabrier: Bourrée Fantasque (Ballet).** New York City Ballet Orchestra conducted by Leon Barzin. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9320) \$4.98.

Two ballet suites by French composers this month, both welcome as performed by the very fine New

York City Ballet Orchestra under its exacting conductor, Leon Barzin.

Roma could have as easily been called a tone poem as a ballet. Bizet loved Rome—every inch of it—and his impressions of and feelings for the city are reflected in this work very boldly. Opera lovers will recognize that a theme from the opening Scherzo was used later in *The Pearl Fishers*. The following Andante and Finale are melodious and evocative; the whole may be enjoyed by anyone, whether or not he has seen the ballet performed, for it is absolute music and stands on its own merits very well.

Bourrée Fantasque is a ballet made up of four Chabrier works: *Marche Joyeuse*, *Bourrée Fantasque*, *Gwendoline Interlude*, and *Fête Polonoise*. These numbers were made into a ballet by George Balanchine, the director of the New York City Ballet, and it was first performed in 1949. Here again the music stands by itself—it requires no visual accompaniment—but the pieces do not seem welded into a whole, as it were, as with the Bizet Suite on the reverse. That, however, is not important to the listener; Chabrier was, indeed, a composer of many gifts, and a performance of his works is always welcome.

Vox, in an effort to obtain high fidelity reproduction, has produced a very steely string tone on its discs of late, although this is easily tone-controlled if your phonograph has a treble control. Mr. Balanchine's notes, written in the first person, should be read by every jacket annotator; they tell the hearer exactly what he wants to know about the disc and are not written with the intent (as, we fear, so many jacket notes are) to show off how much the annotator knows. J.

The Serious Gershwin. Morton Gould (piano) conducting his orchestra. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6033) \$7.98.

CONTENTS: *Rhapsody in Blue*; (3) *Preludes for Piano*; *Concerto in F*; *An American in Paris*; *Porgy and Bess* (piano solo); *Porgy and Bess Suite* (arr. Gould).

The Serious Gershwin is the title of an album which distinguishes it from another album of RCA Victor's titled *The Popular Gershwin* (*V-LPM-6000), which contains nearly thirty of Gershwin's best songs in performances many of which are questionable—the performances, NOT the songs. But in the album presently under consideration we find nothing whatever questionable. One would be hard pressed to name anyone better qualified to produce this remarkable collection than Morton Gould. His reading of the *Rhapsody in Blue* is, to our taste, the best we ever heard; this one really sent us, and we are not ashamed to say that it was the most enjoyable thing in this session of reviewing. And the next most enjoyable (or was it the most enjoyable) thing was the orchestral suite from

Porgy and Bess, fashioned by Gould and played with exquisite feeling. The *Preludes for Piano* and the piano solo (from Act I, Scene 1 of *Porgy*) show Gould again as a fine pianist as well as an able interpreter of Gershwin. Gould's readings of the *Concerto in F* and *An American in Paris* are just as masterful as the readings of the other works in this collection. While Gould is the whole show, as piano soloist in the concerted pieces and conductor of the orchestra, it is to his credit that Gershwin shines through triumphantly. We can find nothing but the highest praise for every facet of this set, including superb reproduction.

There is a twenty-four page, 12" by 12" booklet with text by composer Arthur Schwartz, featuring plenty of pictures. This is a good, sane text, with a happy lack of the usual drooling that too often creeps into these "appreciations." When you have finished listening to this album, you begin to wonder whether Gershwin was not on the right track as an American composer, and most of the rest of our tribe are way off the beam. This is no reworking of European formulas. If he could have lived to double his age (he died at thirty-nine), what would have come from his pen? This album is truly a testament of greatness. S.

Britten: The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a.** Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati, with Deems Taylor (narrator). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50055) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

Britten: The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra, Op. 34. One side, and **Ginastera: Variaciones Concertantes.** Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50047) \$4.98.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$3.98.

When Mercury finally decides to issue a classic, it usually goes all-out, and this time it issues not one, but two versions—for that is the way this grand piece exists: in two forms. Britten's *Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Henry Purcell* is the concert version which is used as a showpiece for crack symphony orchestras, while Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* is the original version, with narration as written for the film. There are minute differences between the two versions; and the narration in the one has been altered slightly for American audiences. The beloved critic, composer and commentator, Deems Taylor, is the narrator, and his characteristically gritty voice once again holds interest. He has prepared an explanatory narration for the Tchaikovsky *Nutcracker Suite*, the music of which has been excerpted from Mercury's complete recording (*ME-OL-2-101),

which found high critical favor in these columns when released. This disc, with narration on both sides, places it rather clearly in the category of children's records, which is not in any way meant to belittle it. On the contrary, more of this and less of the usual trash palmed off on the kiddie labels would be a mighty blessing these days. Any child from about age nine on up should love this record if he has any musical bent whatever. For those children learning an instrument and playing in the school musical programs, this record is perfect—one of the nicest Christmas presents they could receive.

The second disc listed above (with no narration) presents Britten's masterpiece for you and for me, in a brilliant performance. The coupling on this disc is a work new to LP's, by a native of Buenos Aires, Alberto Ginastera. A composer of Latin-American music comparable to Chavez and Villa-Lobos, Ginastera has written a masterful set of variations which feature solo instruments, as compared to Britten's work which features ensemble sections. It is a splendid work which we found not only interesting but also rather beautiful and most pleasing to listen to. Dorati's reading seems to be polished and very carefully prepared, with a wealth of subtle shading. The reproduction, as always with Mercury, is just the last word in quality and perspective. S.

R. Strauss: Schlagobers, Op. 70 ("Whipped Cream") Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra of Nuremberg conducted by Erich Kloss. 2-12" discs in folder (*LYR-LL-41) \$11.90.

Current Market Price of this set: \$9.96.

R. Strauss: Dance Suite after Couperin. Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra of Nuremberg conducted by Erich Kloss. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-58) \$5.95.

Current Market Price of this disc: \$4.98.

R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28. One side, and **R. Strauss: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1891) \$3.98.

Schlagobers is indeed a "whipped cream" confection, and the reason for its virtual non-existence, as far as American audiences is concerned, is quite evident (or audible): without the accompanying ballet, it is of little interest. Rambling through four LP sides, this is tedious music, although it may fill the bill very well when played in the pit to the ballet performance on stage. As it is, we would suggest this once-in-a-lifetime recording to ardent admirers of Richard Strauss who will settle for nothing less than a complete collection of his works. You and I and nearly every other record collector can save a lot of time by skipping this empty bon-bon. For

the record, we must say it has obviously had much loving care lavished on its preparation; performance and recording attest to its being a labor of love.

That Richard Strauss was capable of self-discipline is demonstrated in the *Dance Suite after Couperin*. The scoring is for a small orchestra consisting of: double woodwinds, two horns, trumpet, trombone, celesta, harp, glockenspiel, string quintet (seven violins) and harpsichord. That the master of large canvasses used restraint in this score is evident all the way through it. Here is a realization of early music that is as remarkable as it is delightful. As distinguished from the deservedly neglected concoction listed above, we cannot understand the neglect of this charming score. The suite of dances comprises the following sections: pavane, courante, carillon, sarabande, tourbillon, allemande, gavotte, and marche. Here are eight sections of music that are irresistible, performed with understanding and nice finish, well recorded.

Rarely does one hear a performance of *Till Eulenspiegel* to compare with the present disc by Toscanini. There is refinement of detail that is as startling as it is thrilling. Nobody ever got more, or better, music out of this score; direction, performance, and recording are just elegant. *Death and Transfiguration* is also accorded an exceptional reading, one charged with searing intensity but also with a dignity too often missing. A wonderful Strauss disc and an example of this great conductor at his best. S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Ernest Ansermet, with Pierre Nerini (violin). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1162) \$3.98.

London has seen fit to re-record *Scheherazade* with the same forces who made its original entry in the LP lists (*L-LL-6); and whichever number you ask for now (6 or 1162), you will be getting this newer reproduction. The early set was no prize for reproduction, but it was possibly a better performance than the present one. The new one is a curious affair, for it is definitely good, but it is not the recording of *Scheherazade*. If you want the work done rather four-square and with a tendency toward understatement and a shying away from rhetoric, this is the set for you. But if you really like this mellow old war-horse, rich with the full bloom of romantic splashes of color and sentiment, then you will not be satisfied with this serving. You will find Ormandy and the Philadelphians (*C-ML-4888) can dish it out with far more taste and style, and their reproduction is, if anything, higher, wider, and handsomer. Let's face it: nobody beats Ormandy and his boys in this type of music.

Another good disc of the work is by Dorati, and several others grace the LP lists. Just don't get mixed up with the version by Jean Ladis on Vox,

which we described rather vividly in these columns a few months ago; that is the recording to end all bad recordings.

To get back to Ansermet, who is truly one of our most respected conductors, the fourth movement finds a clarity and a logic which are often missing. In this movement, the conductor's art shows clearly, for Ansermet cleans up the lines in an orderly way, and maintains a good deal of the excitement. If the first two movements had more lushness, this would be a strong contender. We admit it is good, but we still stick to Ormandy for *Scheherazade*. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 36 in C, K. 425** ("Linz"). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5001) \$4.98.

Mozart: Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 28 in C, K. 200.** Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5002) \$4.98.

Two of our favorite Mozart conductors, Bruno Walter and Sir Thomas Beecham, offer pairs of Mozart Symphonies this month to help Columbia celebrate the Mozart Bicentennial; and what wonderful treats these two discs are! Here are first-rate readings sure to please; we doubt you'll find better performances in another 200 years.

Mozart in the Gardens of Mirabell. Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5004) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, K. 525; *Menuette in F*, K. 599; *Menuette in C*, K. 568; (3) *German Dances*, K. 605; *Masonic Funeral Music*, K. 477; *The Magic Flute—Overture*; *The Marriage of Figaro—Overture*; *Così fan Tutte—Overture*; *The Impresario—Overture*.

More music to commemorate the Mozart Bicentennial by Bruno Walter—popular, well-known selections which, according to Columbia, are often played today in the Schloss Mirabell, the palace of Mirabell Gardens, in Salzburg. Dr. Walter can make a piece seem fresh, no matter how many times one has heard it; warmly recommended.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Fidelio** — *Abscheulicher! wo eilst du hin?* (Act I). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35231TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35231) \$4.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc, see under CONCERTO.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15. Geza Anda (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2** ("Moonlight"). Geza Anda (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35248TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35248) \$4.98.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Fidelio—Abscheulicher! wo eilst du hin? (Act I). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35231-TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35231) \$4.98.**

The last LP of the Beethoven *First Concerto* which won praise in these columns was by Serkin and Ormandy (*C-ML-4914); and, despite the fact that it contained nothing else on the disc, we still would call it tops. Geza Anda is far from bad in this work; his is, in fact, a good performance, and he has excellent support from Galliera, a very dependable conductor. There just does not seem to be the concentration and compelling way about this reading that pervades the Serkin performance. If you are not inclined to agree, Anda's disc is a good buy, for it also contains a fine reading of the "Moonlight" Sonata, a bit on the delicate side, but deeply felt and rather convincing. Reproduction is excellent in both works.

For this reviewer, one of the great thrills of recent concert going was the night when von Karajan stepped before the Berlin Philharmonic and conducted the Beethoven *Fifth*. This great orchestra, which had lost its beloved conductor, Wilhelm Furtwängler, on the eve of its departure for a tour of this country, was led on the entire tour by the most promising of the younger conductors. (He has since been named permanent conductor). That performance of the *Fifth* reached the heart of everyone in the audience and won ecstatic critical acclaim. The recollection of that evening has naturally shaded our opinion as we listen to this recording of another great orchestra about to make a tour of this country, also under von Karajan. However, we think most persons will agree that here is a *Fifth* that has virility, strength and power, tempered with a bit of the poetic for which von Karajan is so famous. He is, without any doubt, one of the great conductors of our day. A previous recording of this work, by von Karajan and the Vienna Philharmonic, was praised a few years ago. The present disc is even finer, with better reproduction.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf sings Leonore's Aria from *Fidelio* with breathtaking perfection; we are certain it is the best version ever committed to discs. Her

voice has been recorded superbly. Truly a fine disc, bearing our unqualified recommendation. S.

Vivaldi: Concerto in A for Strings and Harpsichord, Op. 30, No. 1. And **Vivaldi: Concerto in D minor for Violin, Organ, Strings and Harpsichord, Op. 22, No. 4.** One side, and **Leo: Concerto in D for Violoncello and Strings.** And **Sacchini: Edipo a Colono**—Overture. Scarlatti Orchestra conducted by Franco Caracciolo. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35254TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35254) \$4.98.

Music of Vivaldi (Vol. 4). Virtuosi di Roma directed by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9729) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Concerto Grosso in A minor, Op. 3, No. 8; Concerto in G minor for 2 Violins and Strings; Concerto in C minor for Violin and Strings ("Il Sospetto"); Concerto in E for Violin and Strings.*

More of Vivaldi's glorious music plus that of a couple of newcomers to the LP lists. Leonardo Leo (1694-1744) is reputed to have written six 'Cello Concertos; the present one is in three movements, the first two of which are hauntingly slow and indicate that the composer was primarily a melodist—and a good one . . . Antonio Gaspare Sacchini (1730-1786) was famous in his time as a composer of operas but has since fallen into obscurity. *Edipo a Colono* is one of Sacchini's five "French" operas, all of which were written after he had fled to the court of Marie Antoinette. *Edipo* was performed posthumously; it is a delightful little work, Germanic in form, Italianate in melodies.

The Scarlatti Orchestra is a capable group and performs all of its chosen works to perfection. The well-known Virtuosi di Roma is at its usual best, and its new Decca disc will delight its many fans.

Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 53. One side, and **Lalo: Concerto in D minor.** André Navarra (violoncello) with the Orchestra of the Paris Opera conducted by Emanuel Young. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8318) \$4.98.

Prime interest in this disc will be the playing of the very fine French 'cellist, André Navarra, for there are other very fine readings of these works presently in the LP catalogs, one (Nelsova, *L-LL-964, TNR Aug. '54) with the same coupling. Macchula (*EPIC-LC-3072, TNR Mar. '55) is excellent on the Lalo, coupled with Bloch's *Schelomo*.

M. Navarra is a first-rate technician who plays with sensitiveness and feeling; Emanuel Young, the conductor, does not seem to keep the members of the orchestra in line, although admittedly this may be argued as interpretive license, and many may prefer the present treatment. Capitol's FDS reproduction, however, is very much in evidence. If you like the coupling, compare the Nelsova and Na-

varra discs and you will be sure to find one that pleases.

Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in G, K. 216. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 7 in E-flat, K. 268.** Christian Ferras (violin) with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1172) \$3.98.

As there are several other good recordings of the *Concerto No. 3, K. 216*, currently in the LP catalogs, we can hardly see the need of another one, even though it is acceptable. The *Concerto No. 7, K. 268* (previously known as No. 6, but London informs us that most recent classification is now No. 7) has only one other recording (TNR Sept. '52). It is believed not to have been completed by Mozart, but rather by a violinist named Eck, who sold the work to a publisher who represented the work as a genuine Mozart. It wouldn't fool us; and two recordings of it are certainly plenty.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Sonata in B-flat, K. 454. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata in E-flat, K. 481.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and George Szell (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5005) \$4.98.

Mozart: Sonata in E-flat, K. 481. And **Mozart: Sonata in G, K. 11.** One side, and **Mozart: Sonata in D, K. 306.** And **Mozart: Variations on "Helas, J'ai Perdu Mon Amant," K. 360.** Nap de Klijn (violin) and Alice Hecksch (piano). 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3131) \$3.98.

The first disc listed above is another of the Mozart Bicentennial Commemoratives, and it is a fine one. Columbia seems to be competing with itself, though, for Epic is a Columbia subsidiary (Epic records are made by Philips of Netherlands, and Columbia has the American rights to its production); and both the Columbia and Epic disc contain the *Sonata in E-flat, K. 481*. The principal point of difference is that Madame Hecksch employs a Mozart piano, with its thin but more authentic-sounding tone, while George Szell uses a modern instrument. Purists may prefer the Epic disc, then, while ears accustomed to more modern sounds will choose the Columbia record. So far as performance and reproduction are concerned, it is a toss-up; Herr Klijn is an excellent artist and Szigeti turns in his usual fine job.

Grieg: Quartet in G, Op. 27. One and one-half sides, and **Rachmaninoff: Quartet in G minor.** Guilet String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3133) \$3.98.

Grieg completed but one string quartet, and the present LP is its sole recording available at present. We don't understand this neglect, for surely it is a beautiful, well-knit work deserving of a wider hearing. Grieg has spun several haunting melodies

for us in this *Quartet*, and has woven them into the fabric with real craftsmanship; and the Guilet Quartet brings them out to our complete satisfaction.

Rachmaninoff twice undertook to write for string quartet and finished neither effort. This MGM disc offers the two movements written for what was to have been the *First Quartet*, begun in 1889: the *Romance* and the lovely *Scherzo*. These were evidently meant to be the middle two movements; nevertheless, they stand well by themselves. And since they are our only insight into the chamber music of Rachmaninoff available at present, they were well worth recording.

The reproduction of this MGM disc is brilliant and smooth.

Tchaikovsky: Quartet No. 2 in F, Op. 22. Armenian State String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35238TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35238) \$4.98.

Schumann: Quintet in E-flat, Op. 44. Hollywood String Quartet with Victor Aller (piano). One side, and **Hummel: Quartet in G, Op. 30, No. 2.** Hollywood String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8316) \$4.98.

This month the Armenian State String Quartet presents the first LP of Tchaikovsky's *Quartet No. 2 in F*, written in the composer's thirty-fourth year, before he had written anything for which is now known. The Armenian State Quartet has won prizes in Russia, including the Stalin prize; we should like to hear this group in more familiar fare before passing judgment, for Tchaikovsky's *Op. 22* will not prove to be enjoyable to many chamber music lovers. The Second and Third Movements are of passing interest; the First and Final movements drag and proved dull to us. With such an anchor about its neck, the Armenian State Quartet has not had a fair trial.

The Schumann *Quintet in E-flat* is far more familiar, so much so that it is questionable whether another recording is necessary, although no quarrel may be found with the excellent Hollywood group plus Victor Aller. Hummel's *Quartet in G* is here making its first appearance on LP. A contemporary of Beethoven, Hummel's opus sounds more like Haydn or Mozart—a most enjoyable chamber work, dainty and ethereal, played with obvious delight and reproduced with exceptional fidelity.

CHORAL



Spanish Choral Music. Capilla Clasica Polifónica directed by Enrique Ribó. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35257TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35257) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Ave Maria*, *Jesu dulcis memoria*, *O magnum mysterium* (Victoria); *Puer natus est nobis* (Morales); *Ma voluntat amb la rao s'envolpa* (Brudieu); *Dadme albricias hijos de Eva* (Anon.);

Ye florecen los arboles Juan, *D'aquel pastor de la sierra*, *De los alamos vengo madre*, *Morenica dame un beso* (Vasquez); *Sant Josep i la mare de Deu*, *El cant dels ocells*, *El noi de la mare*, *El mal de l'amor*, *Oi Betleem*, *No quiero que me cortejas*, *Sa Ximbomba*, *Paloma revoladora*, *Nana*, *Polo* (Trad.).

The Capilla Clasica Polifónica is a group of some thirty-two voices now connected with the "Department for the Promotion of Decorative Arts, Barcelona" (this sounds much more formidable than it really is). The group is, as one might expect, a thoroughly trained one and is completely at home with its material. Here again one is aware of how fortunate he is to hear music recorded in the country of its origin—certainly the phonograph performs an unique service with such discs as this.

The first side is devoted to Spanish classical religious music of the 16th century and features works by Victoria, Morales, Brudieu and Vasquez. These selections are fine music, typically Spanish in fervor and spirit, and are sung in a manner that is at once authoritative and devotional. Outstanding are the *Victoria Ave Maria* and an anonymous carol *Dadme albricias, hijos de Eva*.

The second side contains some ten traditional songs drawn from Catalan, Basque, Majorcan and Austurian sources. Included are several Christmas carols as well as such secular items as *Sa Ximbomba* (very freely translated as *We're going to a party*) and *Paloma revoladora* (*The Whirling Dove*). Aside from folk interest, the music here enables the Choir to demonstrate its virtuosity, for there are many quick changes of mood and a variety of vocal effects required that call for a high degree of versatility.

Conductor and arranger Enrique Ribó deserves much of the credit for the success of the disc. The Capilla Clasica Polifónica consists of essentially musical voices that perform with considerable purity of tone and genuine expression. Angel has supplied excellent recording, and the factory-sealed package has very informative notes. W.

Britten: Saint Nicholas, Op. 42. (Sung in English).

Peter Pears (tenor), David Hemmings (boy soprano), the Aldenburgh Festival Choir and Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten, with Ralph Downes (organ). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1254) \$3.98.

Britten: Winter Words, Op. 52. One side, and

Britten: (7) Sonnets of Michelangelo, Op. 22. Peter Pears (tenor) accompanied by Benjamin Britten (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1204) \$3.98.

Benjamin Britten's cantata, *Saint Nicholas*, was written in 1948 for the centenary celebration of Lancing College and was first performed at the Aldenburgh Festival in June of that year with the same performers as are on this record. The libretto is based on legendary incidents in the life of Saint Nicholas, patron saint of children, seamen and travellers. The work consists of an introduction and

some eight sections devoted to some phase of Nicholas' life; thus we have *The Journey to Palestine*; *Nicholas from Prison*; *His Piety and Marvelous Works* and so on. Musically, it is a very competent score, sometimes inspired, always interesting. The choral groups and Mr. Pears are at home with their tasks and prove convincing. Once one gets used to the disappointing sound (which is tubby and generally lacking in brilliance), the record reveals considerable charm. Better hear this one first in all events.

The songs on the second disc, sung by the ubiquitous Mr. Pears, date from 1940 for the *Michelangelo Sonnets* and 1953 for the *Winter Words*. The latter group is based on poems by Thomas Hardy and are eight in number. The music for them is, one is told, in Britten's later style, referred to in the notes as "a free vocal style." To this writer, unfortunately, Britten's later vocal style, as evidenced by these songs, leaves much to be desired both as to melody and to character. The *Seven Sonnets*, sung in Italian, while written earlier, are also on the empty side. The recorded sound is much better here.

W.

Haydn: Missa Solemnis in D minor ("Lord Nelson Mass"). Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano); Elizabeth Hoengen (alto); Anton Dermota (tenor); Frederick Guthrie (bass); Vienna Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi, with Anton Heiller (organ). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-470) \$4.98.

Bach: Cantata No. 170 ("Verdnügte Rug", beliebte Seelenlust"). One side, and **Bach: Mass in B minor**—Agnus Dei. And **Bach: Cantata No. 54** ("Widerstehe doch der Sünde"). Alfred Deller (counter-tenor) with the Leonhardt Baroque Ensemble conducted by Gustav Leonhardt (organ). 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-550) \$4.98.

This is the second recording to Haydn's "Lord Nelson Mass" or, more accurately, the *Missa Solemnis in D minor*, and it is obviously a great technical improvement over the earlier Haydn Society release (TNR Feb. '50). Artistically this writer also prefers it to the previous recording because of Rossi's decisive beat and more dramatic approach. The soloists here are all good. Mlles. Stich-Randall and Hoengen and Anton Dermota are well known to record collectors. The basso, Frederick Guthrie, is a young American singer in Europe on a Fulbright scholarship. He has a pleasant voice, well produced and of good quality throughout its range. The "star" of the production, however, remains Mario Rossi, despite all the vocal excellences. There is a crispness and drive about the performance that is unusual. Mo. Rossi has been able to infuse some Italian spirit into the singer's and orchestra's Austrian *gemütlichkeit* and the result is a stirring rendition of one of Haydn's most inspired scores.

The two Bach Cantatas have both been recorded

before, No. 54 once and No. 170 three times, in all instances by contraltos or mezzo-sopranos. The chief interest here, after the music, lies in Alfred Deller's exquisite counter-tenor. Yet, fine as the artistry and accompaniments are, this listener had difficulty in getting used to Mr. Deller singing Bach. Other discs he has made, notably the *Elisabethan and Jacobean Music* and the Purcell, Jenkins and Locke disc, were both fascinating and authentic; but the male alto seems a little out of place in these Cantatas. This is, of course, strictly subjective; there is nothing to complain about as to performance or style; it is simply that Alfred Deller's vocal quality—so beautiful elsewhere—is not particularly suited to Bach.

There are excellent notes, texts and good sound on both discs.

W.

OPERA



Verdi: Aida (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera conducted by Jonel Perlea. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6122) \$11.98.

Aida Zinka Milanov (s)
Amneris Fedora Barbieri (ms)
Rhadames Jussi Bjoerling (t)
Amonasro Leonard Warren (bt)
Ramfis Boris Christoff (bs)

Back in the "good old days," somewhere around 1928, the then Victor Talking Machine Company issued a complete *Aida* featuring Dusolina Giannini, Aureliano Pertile and Giovanni Inghilleri; the cost of the album was \$28.50. The sound, for those days, was pretty good, and the performance was acknowledged to be first class. Now, RCA Victor has just recorded *Aida* again with what is admittedly about the best cast that could be obtained—Milanov, Barbieri, Bjoerling, Warren and Christoff. The quality of sound here achieved has seldom been equalled, and the performance can best be described as "stunning"—and the price for all this? \$11.98, or about 42% of the cost of the 1928 set. What do they mean, the "good old days"?

To get down to individual cases, Mmes. Milanov and Barbieri could hardly be surpassed. Both are superb singers and, for this recording, are in the groove, both literally and figuratively. It is impossible to single out any particular passage or passages, for from the beginning to the end each artist sings and plays her role to the hilt. Leonard Warren and Boris Christoff are a sonorous-voiced pair who turn in performances that are vocally superior; and, if Mr. Warren's Amonasro has a trace of "hamminess" about it, there are extenuating circumstances—the Ethiopian King is an "operatic" character par excellence. Boris Christoff is a dignified

Ramfis.

The writer has saved the two surprises (at least to him) for the end. Number one is Jussi Björling, who gives his best performance on records to date. This writer had complained only as recently as a month or so ago that Björling was "wooden" and sang without expression. Well, someone must have built a fire under him for this recording, for his performance of Rhadames is a virile and dramatic one, both vocally and histrionically. The second surprise is Jonel Perlea, who directs this fiery *Aida*; his performance has style, feeling, movement and makes musical sense. Considering the dreary *Manon Lescaut* (TNR Oct. '55), one is at a loss to account for the change—maybe he likes *Aida* better? Since the change is all for the good, perhaps we should be grateful and let it go at that.

This *Aida* puts all the others in the shade. Actually there were two others that could stand comparison: Cetra's (TNR Feb. '52) and London's (TNR Feb. '53); but neither of them carries anything approaching the artistic and technical wallop of the present set. In addition there are excellent notes by the late Olin Downes and the complete libretto in a very tasteful and attractive package. RCA Victor can very well be proud of this one—put it on the same shelf with its recent *Madama Butterfly*. W.

Rossini: Il Turco in Italia (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala conducted by Gianandrea Gavazzeni. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35176/8TP) \$9.94. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3535-S/L) \$13.98.

Selim Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (bs)
Fiorilla Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Don Narciso Nicolai Gedda (t)
Zaida Jolanda Gardino (ms)
Don Geronio Franco Calabrese (bs)
Poet Mariano Stabile (bt)
Albazar Piero de Palma (t)

Sequels to novels, plays and operas have a tendency to fall somewhat below the high artistic levels of the works they follow and, after a rather sprightly beginning, that is the melancholy fate of *Il Turco in Italia*; it just does not come up to the high musical and dramatic mark set by *L'Italiana in Algeri*.

The cast, on the whole, is only fair. The brightest star, as one might expect, is Maria Callas, very happy in a lyrico-coloratura part that is much more suited to her voice than the heavy dramatic roles she has essayed in the past. The sparkling music is sung with considerable *élan* and with more humor than she has heretofore been able to indulge in. As the gypsy, Zaida, Jolanda Gardino gives a good, if not too imaginative, performance.

Among the men, basso Calabrese proves to be the best vocalist and actor. Niccola Rossi-Lemeni seems wooden, lacking in any sort of sparkle or brilliance. Vocally he is better here than in some of

his previous recordings, notably *Norma*, but he is still no great shakes so far as this corner is concerned. Mariano Stabile is an old timer and sounds it sometimes, particularly when he has to go after a high note; and when he has a sustained note the resultant wobble is not at all attractive. Tenors Gedda and de Palma sing their parts but nothing more; they are content to remain performers on the larynx.

Perhaps the best performance is turned in from the conductor's desk, for Gianandrea Gavazzeni keeps the work moving despite certain ponderous tendencies on the part of certain members of the cast. There is good sound, fine balance and an elaborate libretto. W.

Operatic Recital. Maria Meneghini Callas (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Tullio Serafin. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35233TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35233) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Adriana Lecouvreur*—Io son l'umile ancella & Poveri fiori; *Andrea Chenier*—La mamma morta; *La Wally*—Ebben? ne andrò lontana; *Méfistofele*—L'altra notte in fondo al mare; *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*—Una voce poco fa; *Dinorah*—Ombra leggiera; *Lakmé*—Dov' è l'Indiana bruna (Bell Song); *I Vespri Siciliani*—Bolero: Mercè, dilette amiche.

This writer's views on "operatic recitals" are probably well known to readers of these columns so it is unnecessary to elaborate any further at this time. Yet it is an ill wind that does not blow some good somewhere. Miss Callas is a remarkably gifted young lady who, it would seem, fears nothing. Lyric, dramatic and coloratura arias are undertaken with, to be sure, varying degrees of artistic and musical success; yet there is always an element of sincerity and earnestness in each performance that is completely disarming.

The present disc contains quite a few moments of genuine beauty and of exquisite singing. They are to be found in the excerpts from "La Wally" and "Méfistofele" and in the aria *Poveri fiori* from "Adriana Lecouvreur." In fact, the "Méfistofele" aria sent your correspondent scurrying for his old Muzio recording of the music and (lo and behold!) Miss Callas matched la Muzio note for note—it is a thrilling bit of music to begin with and, when superbly sung, can be very, very exciting. This aria alone is virtually worth the price of the disc.

In the coloratura department our soprano *sans peur et sans reproche* is a little less successful in this writer's opinion; nevertheless, she remains a very individual singer and, after all, there is probably more than one way to sing "Una voce poco fa" or the inevitable Bell Song from "Lakmé."

Tullio Serafin is the dutiful and able conductor of the accompaniments that, one is sure, are tailored to suit the soloists cloth; it is Mo. Serafin who is

docile and not Miss Callas. There are good sound, the texts (Italian only) of the arias, and several lovely photographs of the artist. W.

Borodin: Prince Igor (complete). (Sung in Russian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the National Opera (Belgrade) conducted by Oscar Danon. 5-12" discs in album (*L-XLLA-30) \$24.90.

Prince IgorDushan Popovich (bt)
YaroslavnaValeria Heybalova (s)
VladimirNoni Zhunetz (t)
Prince Galitsky }Zharko Tzveych (bs)
Konchak }
KonchakovnaMalanie Bugarinovich (ms)

One of the great advantages of recorded music is that one can hear operatic or symphonic scores performed "on location," as it were. Here, for example, one is taken to Belgrade to hear Borodin's (and Rimsky-Korsakov's and Glazounov's) colorful and exciting *Prince Igor*. It must be stated at the outset that all the trouble and expense London obviously went to are amply justified by the results obtained.

Prince Igor, Borodin's most famous composition, is a great sprawling work full of oriental color, exotic rhythms and lovely melodies. There are some real people, musically speaking, in the work too, such as Prince Galitsky, Khan Konchak and, of course, the Prince himself. On the distaff side the characters are not drawn quite so sharply, so Yaroslavna (Igor's wife) and Konchakovna (the Khan's daughter) seem a little pale (musically) by comparison with the riotous warriors. There are many choral passages of great beauty scattered throughout the work that, far from interrupting the flow of the opera, actually weld it together.

The performance presented here is a very good one. It is ostensibly complete (ten LP sides should do it!) and is well sung by any standards. Dushan Popovich exhibits a virile baritone that is equal to all the demands the role places on it. Zharko Tzveych, who sings the dual roles of Galitsky and Konchak, is a real Russian bass who, in addition to having a deep musical voice, is a born actor. His portrayals are very convincing.

The ladies, Mmes. Heybalova and Bugarinovich, do well, although the former's voice is a little on the thin side; but their singing is always adequate, accurate and generally musical. The choral and orchestral passages are notable for precision, color and expressiveness.

One obviously cannot do justice to such a tremendous work as *Prince Igor* in the limited space at one's disposal. Certainly this recorded performance can be highly recommended both musically and technically. The sound is, in fact, right up with the best London has given us. The set is well worth investigation and will probably not be improved on for some time to come (said he with

his fingers crossed). An earlier, abridged version of *Prince Igor* (TNR Jan. '53) is outclassed on all counts. W.

Moussorgsky: Khovantchina (complete). (Sung in Russian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the National Opera (Belgrade) conducted by Kreshimir Baranovich. 4-12" discs in album (*L-XLLA-29) \$19.92.

Prince Ivan KhovanskyZharko Tzveych (bs)
Prince Andrew Khovansky

Alexander Marinkovich (t)
Prince Vassily GolitsinDrago Startz (t)
Boyar ShaklovityDushan Popovich (bt)
DositheisMiro Changalovich (bs)
MarthaMelanie Bugarinovich (ms)
ScrivenerSetpan Andrashevich (t)
EmmaSofiya Jankovich (s)
SusannaAnita Mezetova (s)

A first recording of prime importance has been brought back from Belgrade by London's engineers in the form of a "complete" *Khovantchina*. This work, like so many Russian operas, was left incomplete by the composer's untimely death and was finished by the ever-ready and willing Rimsky-Korsakov. Certainly whatever the ultimate verdict on Rimsky's work as a reviser and arranger may be, none can deny him the deepest gratitude for making available some of Moussorgsky's most beautiful and characteristic music.

Khovantchina was first performed by an amateur group in 1886; and later, in 1911 at the Marie Theatre, St. Petersburg, a professional premiere was held. The first American performance was by the Pennsylvania Grand Opera Co. in 1928, and there has been a handful of performances in English by the Metropolitan. Finally, for those interested, *Khovantchina* is pronounced Khah-vahn'-tschee-na; the initial K being in reality a "hard H" and the succeeding "o" being sounded as "ah."

This performance by the National Opera, Belgrade, directed by Kreshimir Baranovich, is a first-rate one. All the singers have fine voices; particularly outstanding are Zharko Tzveych (Prince Ivan) and Miro Changalovich (Dositheis), but the others are all more than adequate.

Khovantchina is a magnificent musical score that, while it has dramatic weaknesses (the lack of a strong central character is one) is, nonetheless, a fascinating work and one that is all too seldom heard. Repeated hearings, it is obvious, will continue to reveal new beauties and hidden meanings. How much is Moussorgsky's and how much is due to Rimsky-Korsakov's fine hand is a question for musicologists to determine—certainly the opera, as recorded here, is coherent and sensible, if a little static dramatically.

The present recording, then, fills a long felt need, and it is a distinct pleasure to report that every

artistic and technical feature is top drawer. W.

Walton: Troilus and Cressida (excerpts). (Sung in English). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) and Richard Lewis (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by William Walton. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35278) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35278/L) \$5.98.

The current renaissance of British music has evidenced itself by scores of all description, but it is the operatic works that have caused the most discussion. Since the British, as a nation, are very phonographically minded, it does not take long for the music to appear in recorded form.

Troilus and Cressida is Sir William Walton's latest opera and had its premiere at Covent Garden on 3 December, 1954. It is based on Chaucer's tale, *Troilus and Criseide*, not on Shakespeare's play. The libretto, a fine piece of work, is by Christopher Hassall. The excerpts recorded here comprise the principal scenes between Troilus and Cressida; i.e., the first act duet and the love duet from Act 2. Also included are two "arias" for Cressida: *How can I sleep?* and, from the last act, *O tranquil Goddess, Queen of the Dead*. The disc closes with the finale of the opera *Turn, Troilus, turn, on that cold river's brim*. The music is powerful and fits the unfolding tragedy like the proverbial glove. Sir William, in a note on the opera writes, "... it was ... my concern to recreate the characters in my own idiom as an example of English *bel canto* ... in the hope of adding another singers' opera to the repertory." How well he has succeeded in these twin endeavors must be decided by listeners for the first and time for the second.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Richard Lewis, assisted by Eva Sinclair, sing the difficult music in superb fashion. As is so often the case, new music such as this does not reveal all its meaning and beauty on one or two hearings, but this writer heard enough to convince him that there is considerable merit to the score and that it will repay investigation. It is primarily for the modern music lover but also for the inquisitive opera aficionado. There is gorgeous sound, a beautiful package and the texts of the excerpts, plus notes by composer and librettist. W.

Verdi: Rigoletto (arias and duets). Mattiwillda Dobbs (soprano) and Rolando Panerai (baritone) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. One side, and **Operatic Recital**. Mattiwillda Dobbs (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35095 TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35095) \$4.98.

CONTENTS OF RECITAL: *Coq d'Or*—Hymn to the Sun; *Manon*—Obéissons, quand leur voix appelle; *La Sonnambula*—Ah non credea mirarti; *Lakmé*—Sous le ciel tout étoilé; *Lakmé*—Les fleurs me paraissent plus belles (recit.) & Pourquoi dans

les grands bois (aria).

This is Mattiwillda Dobbs' second appearance on Angel Records; and, with the aid of some very dramatic music, Rolando Panerai, and very "large" recording, it turns out to be even more impressive than the earlier disc. Miss Dobbs is a young American Negro who has one of the most glorious lyric soprano voices on or off records. Her successes have largely been in Europe and include appearances at La Scala and Covent Garden. Her American operatic debut is scheduled for this fall at San Francisco.

The *Rigoletto* excerpts are three in number, beginning with a stirring version of *Pari siamo* that also includes the ensuing duet with Gilda. Then Miss Dobbs delivers herself of a very lovely *Caro nome* and demonstrates again her ability to spin a phrase in a very effective manner. The first side closes with both soloists singing the theatrically gruesome but magnificently dramatic finale to the opera, *Lassù in cielo*, in sterling fashion.

Side two is musically quite lightweight; in fact, after the *Coq d'Or* aria, musical, but not artistic, interest declines rapidly. Perhaps it is the contrast with the *Rigoletto* excerpts, but the rest of the music seems only to serve as a frame in which the soloist exhibits her pearly tones. Needless to say, each aria is sung with expression and is not treated as a laryngeal exercise. Mattiwillda Dobbs is too fine an artist to stoop to such practices.

Far from being a silent partner, Alceo Galliera provides accompaniments that are rousing in the case of *Rigoletto* and solid for the "recital" on side two. Recorded sound is first class; it is clear and quite "big," with very effective resonance—a disc to be recommended warmly to all those interested in fine singing. W.

Moussorgsky: Khovantchina (excerpts). (Sung in Russian). Zara Dolokhanova (mezzo-soprano); Pavel Pontryagin and Veniamin Shevtzov (tenors); Alexander Pirogov, Alexander Tikhonov and Boris Dobrin (basses); various orchestras and choruses. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6022) \$4.98.

Great Operatic Scenes. Paul Schoeffler (bass) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-469) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Die Walküre*—Wotan's Farewell & Magic Fire Music, (Act III); *Parsifal*—Amfortas's Monologue (Act I); *Simon Boccanegra*—M'ardon le tempia (Act III); *I Vespri Siciliani*—O tu Palermo (Act II); *L'Africaine*—Figlia de Re (Act II); *Die Meistersinger*—Fliedermonolog (Act II).

Hard on the heels of the complete London issue of Moussorgsky's *Khovantchina* comes this Vanguard disc of excerpts, made in Russia but processed in this country. The following selections are on the record: (1) *Prelude to Act I*; (2) *Opening Scene*—Scribe and people; (3) *Martha's Divination*; (4)

Martha's Aria Act III; (5) *Aria of Prince Shakhlovitye*; and (6) *Finale to Act III*. The tapes seem to have been made at different times and on various locations. Thus we have the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra under Nebolsin and several sections by the USSR Radio Orchestra and Chorus directed by Alexei Kavalev while the Pirogov excerpt was made at still another place. By and large, the interpretations are well realized, the disc has an authoritative ring about it. Pirogov is one of the USSR's foremost basses, but he is not happy as Prince Shakhlovitye—the role is for baritone and lies too high for him. Mme. Dolokhanova, like so many of the Russian mezzos, has a strong, colorful voice and sings her two arias in polished fashion. The other singers are also new to this writer, but they are more than adequate and turn in solid performances. The *Prelude to Act I* is very well played and, while the recording is about the best this writer has yet heard from Soviet sources, it does not come up to our domestic or European quality by any means. There are portions that break up and get fuzzy; this is especially noticeable in the massed scenes at high volume.

The disc of operatic excerpts by the redoubtable Paul Schoeffler is an unalloyed delight. The *Walküre*, *Parsifal* and *Meistersinger* excerpts are sung about as well as one will ever hear them. Herr Schoeffler has made these parts pretty much his own, in the manner Frederick Schorr did in the Twenties and Thirties. More surprising to this reviewer was the polished and stylish performances of the Verdi and Meyerbeer arias. The whole affair comes off extremely well, and the record can be recommended without reserve. Very good sound, too. W.

Britten: The Turn of the Screw, Op. 54. Soloists and the English Opera Group Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten. 2-12" discs in album (*LXLL-1207/8) \$9.96.

The Prologue	Peter Pears (t)
Governess	Jennifer Vyvyan (s)
Miles } Children in her charge {	David Hemmings (treble)
Flora }	Olive Dyer (s)
Mrs. Grose	Joan Cross (s)
Quint	Peter Pears (t)
Miss Jessel	Arda Mandikian (s)

The cause of "opera in English" gets quite a boost this month with the release of Benjamin Britten's eighth opera, *The Turn of the Screw*. Not only does the libretto, based on a story of the same name by Henry James make good sense; it is also good literature, and Britten's music is evocative and melodious.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the score is the very ingenious method by which Britten obtains his effects. The opera, after a brief prologue, falls into two symmetrical acts, each of eight scenes. The scenes are linked together by orchestral interludes. Britten achieves the unification of the inter-

ludes by casting them in the form of a theme (prelude to Act 1, scene 1) and fifteen variations (the fifteen interludes between the scenes of the two acts). The whole opera, then, is contained within this huge set of orchestral variations whose theme (the "Screw") not only serves the variations but also determines the shape of the opera's scenes. By this essentially simple but unusual device the composer creates both musical and psychological unity. The many effects, largely "atmospheric" and psychological, are achieved by an economy of means that calls for unreserved admiration; and they are all the more striking for the very restraint that is exercised.

The cast is an excellent one headed by Peter Pears and Jennifer Vyvyan, and these two are ably supported by Joan Cross and Arda Mandikian. With Benjamin Britten directing the recording, one is assured of a performance that is authentic. Certainly he captures the "horror" atmosphere in a very convincing fashion, and the work moves on to its frightening conclusion with a degree of inevitability that one seldom encounters in a modern work.

Both musically and artistically, then, this recording can be recommended. The package includes detailed notes and the libretto. London's very best *ffrr* sound is also in evidence. Be sure to hear this one if you are at all interested in modern music or good theatre. W.

VOCAL



Kleinsinger: Archy and Mehitabel. Eddie Bracken and Carol Channing, with narration by David Wayne and orchestra conducted by George Kleinsinger. One side, and **Kleinsinger: Echoes of Archy.** David Wayne (narrator) with orchestra conducted by George Kleinsinger. 1-12" disc (*C-M-L-4963) \$4.98.

anyone who remembers the wonderful stories by don marquis about archy, the cockroach, and mehitabel, the cat, will understand and probably enjoy this disc. one will recall that archy was a poet at heart, and found expression by writing on marquis' typewriter, which he did by jumping bodily on the keys; of course, archy couldn't use the shift key, so he could make no capital letters. mehitabel, the eternally-disappointed-in-love-but-toujours-gai cat, was the subject of much of archy's writing.

archy and mehitabel is subtitled "a back alley opera," and features eddie bracken and carol channing in the title roles, with david wayne telling the story. kleinsinger's music fits the story, eddie bracken is a trifle weak for a cockroach "with a poet's heart," and carol channing sounds exactly like lorelei lee, of *gentlemen prefer blondes*. of greater interest to us was *echoes of archy*, wherein joe darion has incorporated into the story much of

the pointed irony of archy's philosophy, excellently narrated and sung by David Wayne. Marquis' little bug was a clever fellow, indeed, and it is good to have him come to life on records; and we hope we don't ever have to type without capitals again! J.

Scotch and Irish Songs. Rev. Sydney MacEwan (tenor) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5067) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *The Dashing White Sergeant; Galway Bay; The Meeting of the Waters; See amid the Winter Snow; Mowing the Barley; Lewis Bridal Song; The Rowan Tree; Come to the Manger; The Lark in the Clear Air; Kelly, the Boy from Killann.*

In April 1955 we reviewed an MGM disc of Father MacEwan, noting the fact that MGM's calling the Father "the second McCormack" was stretching things a bit. Columbia refers to him as the "Ecclesiastical Bing Crosby," a comparison too much the other way; Father MacEwan's voice shows considerably more training than "Der Bingle's." We rather feel that, were he not a priest, his singing would attract little attention; pleasant, clear, but not exceptional singing calculated to make the sons and daughters of the old sod dab a misty eye.

Falla: (7) Canciones Populares Españoles. One side, and **(9) Spanish Tonadillas and Cantares.** Néstor Chayres (tenor) accompanied by Fritz Kramer (piano). 1-12" disc (*KINGS-KL-300) \$2.98.

CONTENTS OF TONADILLAS & CANTARES: *Mi Pobre Reja (Tabuyo); Del Cabello Mas Sutil (Obradors); La Partida (Alvarez); Copla (Moral); Clavelitos (Valverde); Mi Maja (Tragan); A Granada (Palacios); Hableme de Amores (Fuste); Grandinas (Calleja).*

Israeli Songs. Sharon Aron (singer) with guitar accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65018) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *At At; Roeh Ve'roah; Gizratech; Ada; Orchah Bamidbar; Chof Shaket; Shir Habokrim; Finjan; Hanava Babanot; Dodi Li; Le'or Hazichronot; Im Ba'arazim; Laila, Laila; Yoram; Noomi, Noomi Nim.*

This Kingsway disc of "popular" Spanish music is a strange one, not so much from the choice of material (which is reasonably straightforward) but from the choice of the singer. Señor Chayres has a very nasal tenor, not a pleasing or even ingriating voice at all. It is difficult to understand just what one is to gather from the disc. If it purports to be folk music and Néstor Chayres a folk singer, well, in such a case one is inclined to overlook the peculiar voice. But side one is devoted to Falla's Spanish "popular" songs (not folk art by any means) and the other side includes such "art" songs as *Clavelitos, A Granada and Hableme de Amores*; so the "folk" excuse must be disregarded. Better hear this one first, despite the singer's obvious familiarity

with his material. Exceptionally good sound.

The *Israeli Songs* are quite a different matter. Miss Aron sings some fifteen "folk" (perhaps a better description would be "popular") songs in a very pleasant voice that, while it is relatively untrained, is very easy on the ears and aids in the singer's avowed purpose of avoiding commercialization of the music—she wants to present "the music of (her) people as they would sing it." The songs, many of them delightful, are always entertaining and will lend a slightly exotic flavor to the average record library. The sound is good, and there are excellent notes and the English versions of the songs on the jacket. W.

Les Compagnons de la Chanson. Les Compagnons de la Chanson. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65022) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Auprès de ma Blonde; Lettre à Virginie; Il y'Avait Trois Jeunes Garçons; Avec ce Soleil; Trop Beau pour Etre Vrai; Mon Ami, Mon Ami; J'ai Promis à Mon Amour; Chanson pour l'Auvergnat; Quand on s'a, Quand on s'Aime; Pauvre Pecheur; The Three Bells.*

A dozen songs sung by a most ingriating group of Frenchmen; the ebullience and spirit of this group always excite its concert audiences, and Angel gives us a pleasant souvenir of some of its best-liked numbers.

Bach: Cantata No. 170. One side, and **Bach: Mass in B minor**—Agnus Dei. And **Bach: Cantata No. 54.** Alfred Deller (counter-tenor) with the Leonhardt Baroque Ensemble conducted by Gustav Leonhardt (organ). 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-550) \$4.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

Britten: Winter Words, Op. 52. One side, and **Britten (7) Sonnets of Michelangelo, Op. 22.** Peter Pears (tenor) accompanied by Benjamin Britten (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1204) \$3.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc, see under CHORAL.

PIANO

The Siena Pianoforte. Charles Rosen, playing the Siena Pianoforte. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ESP-3000) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (6) *Sonatas (Scarlatti); Sonata in B-flat, K. 333 (Mozart).*

The Siena Pianoforte (Vol. II). Anatole Kitain, playing the Siena Pianoforte. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ESP-3001) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Partita in D minor — Chaconne (arr. Busoni); Partita No. 1 in B-flat; Cantata No. 147—Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (arr. Hess); Cantata No. 208—Sheep May Safely Graze (arr. Petri);*

Toccata No. 1 in C—Adagio (arr. Hess) (all by Bach).

The history of the Siena Pianoforte reads almost like a novel; lack of space will not permit our relating all of the details here, but you may read the whole story in the notes on the jackets of these extraordinary discs. It is enough, for our purposes, to say that the instrument was built in the first decade of the 1800's by the Marchesio family of Turin, was played by Liszt and other great musicians, and after the most unbelievable circumstances, was left, post-World War II, to rot on a Tel-Aviv side street, where it was discovered by one Avner Carmi, a piano tuner who knew of the existence of the Siena Pianoforte and who had been trying, for thirty years, to get to see and hear it.

Mr. Carmi has restored the instrument; only the sounding board remains from its original equipment. There are no tricks, no electronic gadgets, nor is the piano prepared (*à la* John Cage); yet its sound is unique. At first it will sound like a harpsichord to you, until you notice that the strings are not plucked, but struck; but they are struck ever so gently in the soft passages, giving way to roars in the loud passages. The sounds are sweeter than one is wont to hear from even the best concert grands.

Students and lovers of the piano are urged to hear these discs. The works are selected to show off the instrument, which they do admirably. Reproduction is superb, and Esoteric's surfaces are absolutely noiseless.

Chopin Recital. Nikita Magaloff (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1189) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58; Impromptu No. 1 in A-flat, Op. 29; Impromptu No. 2 in F-sharp, Op. 36; Impromptu No. 3 in G-flat, Op. 51; Impromptu No. 4 in C-sharp minor, Op. 66 ("Fantasie-Impromptu"); Berceuse in D-flat, Op. 57.*

Mozart Piano Sonatas. Paolo Spagnolo (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1212) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Sonata in F, K. Anh. 135; Sonata No. 7 in C, K. 309; Sonata No. 12 in F, K. 332; Sonata No. 4 in E-flat, K. 282.*

People never seem to get enough of Chopin's lovely piano music; here's another good disc to add to the available selections . . . Paolo Spagnolo has the right touch for Mozart, and his interpretations of these four little sonatas are certain to please.

ORGAN

An Adventure in High-Fidelity Organ Sound.

William Watkins, playing the organ at the Calvary Methodist Church, Washington (D.C.). 1-12" disc (*McINTOSH MM-106) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Idoménée—Rigaudon* (Campra); *Concerto in F, Op. 4, No. 5* (Handel); *Fantasia and*

Fugue in G minor (Bach); (9) *Pièces—Chant Héroïque* (Langlais); *Variations on a Noël, Op. 20* (Dupré); (11) *Chorale Preludes, Op. 122—Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* (Brahms); (5) *Short Pieces for Organ* (1930)—Paeon (Whitlock).

Here is a wholly admirable organ record. It is high on the list of truly fine organ reproductions, yielding a tone exceptionally rich in the lower registers. We do not recall having heard better bass reproduction on any organ record, which is not to slight the excellence of the upper cycle reproduction. However, the fact that the bass is so accurately reproduced is what makes this record such a realistic facsimile of organ tone, for the depth and richness of an organ are very elusive to recording engineers. This sounds like an organ and not like a calliope because it is well recorded and also because the organ is voiced like an organ and not like a collection of penny whistles. The organ is a modest sized Aeolian-Skinner of 31 ranks, built in 1940. It contains some exquisitely voiced registers, and the ensemble has a meatiness topped by a brilliance that is well under control—no squeak and squeal. The proof is that various different types of music sound wonderful on this organ—Bach, Handel, Brahms, modern French, old, new, romantic, modern. We would only add that no monitoring was done during the recording; what you hear is mighty close to what you would hear were you seated about twelve feet from the tone opening of the organ.

William Watkins, organist of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church of Washington, D.C., is a pupil of Virgil Fox and a recognized luminary in the field of young organ virtuosi. His choice of program is, in our opinion, superb, and the order in which it is played is logical and satisfying. The Handel *Concerto* is our favorite among all that Handel wrote; this one has been arranged for solo organ by Marcel Dupré. In all, it is a disc to be highly recommended. S.

Ellsasser: Erin, O Erin! (A Thomas Moore Suite.).

Richard Ellsasser, playing the Baldwin Electronic Organ. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3205) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *The Harp That Once through Tara's Hall; Rich and Rare Were the Gems She Wore; We May Roam thro' This World; Come Rest in This Bosom; Drink to Her; 'Tis the Last Rose of Summer; As Slow Our Ship; Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms; The Minstrel Boy; Erin, O Erin!*

We have expressed our admiration for the playing of Richard Ellsasser in these columns many times. But Mr. Ellsasser's arrangement of these little Irish tunes for an electronic organ, while they may be just the thing to amuse his friends, hardly seem worth recording; we thought that we might be able to pass them off as suitable background or mood music, but the organist's tricky effects only serve to distract rather than to soothe. Recommended

only to those who fancy hearing what an electronic organ may be made to do by an expert.



BAND

The Scots Guards. Regimental Band and the Massed Pipers of the Scots Guards directed by Lt. Col. Sam Rhodes. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35271TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35271) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Garb of Old Gaul, Moray Firth, Lilliburlero, Golden Spurs, The Wee Macgregor, Les Huguenots—March, Scotland the Brave, Cock o' the North, Hielan' Laddie* (Military Band); *The Lochaber Gathering, The Fiddlers Joy, Johnnie MacDonald, The 10th Battalion H. L. I. Crossing the Rhine, Hielan' Laddie, The Corn Riggs, The Portree Men, Stumpie, Hielan' Whisky, The Blackbird, Major John MacLennan, The Kilworth Hills* (Massed Pipers).

Angel has come up with another great band record! It is not to be compared with the disc featuring La Garde Républicaine Band (TNR Oct. '55), but the present LP is equally outstanding in its own way. For on this record you'll hear the Regimental Band and the Massed Pipers of the Scots Guards, an organization steeped in tradition with high musical standards. The band music is martial and the music for the pipers is spirited and fitting. Even if you have heard bagpipe music before and didn't care for it, try this LP; if it doesn't win you over, nothing will.

NOTE: We learned, via this disc, that the hit tune, *My Bonnie Lassie*, did not seem as banal to us as most of the current crop because it is really the march, *Scotland the Brave*.

American Symphonic Band of the Air Concert.

American Symphonic Band of the Air conducted by Dr. William D. Revelli. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-8157) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Nobles of the Mystic Shrine* (Sousa); *Mlada—Procession of Nobles* (Rimsky-Korsakov—arr. Leidzen); *Beguine for Band* (Osser); *El Relicario* (Padilla); *Beatrice and Benedict—Overture* (Berlioz); *Block "M" March* (Bilik); *His Honor* (Fillmore); *Tamboo* (Cavez); *Relax* (Yoder); *Kiddie Ballet* (Hermann); *A Step Ahead* (Alford).

Nobody likes a band any better than we do; and the American Symphonic Band of the Air, a new organization, is obviously a talented group. But for most of us, bands mean marching music; we just got off to a fine start on this disc, when the band broke into a Beguine, a Tango, and later on a Samba and a Rhumba. That is the trouble with collections like this; usually a lemon or two will spoil the record. You may like Rhumbas, etc., played by a band, and if you do, the American Symphonic Band of the Air plays them as well as you could want; but if you're looking for a really great

band record of Marches, don't miss Angel's French and American Military Marches by La Garde Républicaine Band (*ANG-35260, TNR Oct. '55).



DICTION

Shakespeare: (20) Sonnets. Dame Edith Evans (reading). One side, and **Shakespeare: As You Like It** (scenes). Dame Edith Evans and Michael Redgrave, with supporting players. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35220TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35220) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: Sonnets Nos. 2, 8, 15, 18, 23, 27, 29, 33, 52, 56, 57, 61, 66, 73, 91, 94, 97, 104, 106, 116. *As You Like It—Act I, Sc. 3; Act III, Sc. 2; Act III, Sc. 5; Act IV, Sc. 1; Epilogue.*

We could not imagine Shakespeare's Sonnets read by a woman, but we had not reckoned with the ability of Dame Edith Evans to turn each into a poignant love letter; we had hardly got through the first when we quite forgot the sex of the speaker and listened enraptured to the whole twenty—each a little jewel.

Excerpts from plays may or may not sit well with you; sometimes it may seem unreal to burst suddenly into the middle of a play and pick up the action after it has already begun. That this can be done to a Shakespearean play is one more fact attesting to his genius; for the Bard knew how to write for the commercial stage, with unruly, late-arriving audiences. Dame Edith Evans and Michael Redgrave, with Ursula Jeans, Peter Coke and Jessie Evans in the supporting roles, depict five scenes from *As You Like It* with superior diction; one has no trouble "seeing" the play, for the actors impart the spirit and action of the comedy to the hearer wonderfully. This is a really good Shakespearean disc; it is heartily recommended.

Spanish is Fun.

Edited and compiled by Prof. Joseph Raymond and narrated by Ernesto Hoffman Lievano. 1-12" disc (*SMC-1006) \$4.98.

We supposed that Spanish is the most popular and most practical foreign language studied by Americans, and there are numerous courses on phonograph records available which will teach the student who has had no previous training in the language. The best of these is undoubtedly the Linguaphone course, which sells for \$57.50; there are many "introductory" courses suited to the occasional traveler, which will teach him enough to get around in a Spanish-speaking country.

Such a course, however, is NOT the present one; rather it is specifically designed for the student who has more than a beginning knowledge of Spanish, who plans on going to a Spanish-speaking country, and who is desirous of adding a sparkle to his conversation. Contained on this disc are many proverbs, stories, and songs on a great variety of subjects which, if incorporated into a speech or into

one's everyday conversation, will give the hearer the impression that one is rather more familiar with the Spanish language than, perhaps, one really is. The proverbs, for example, are classified by subjects, some of which are Absence, Beauty, Consolation, Gamble, Haste, Hypocrisy, Patience, etc.; this will enable one to quote a Spanish proverb to suit his subject or point.

Prof. Raymond is in the Department of Romance Languages of the Pennsylvania State University, and is very much a leader in the movement to popularize the study of languages, particularly Spanish. He feels that learning trite phrases, such as "Where is the station?", is dull, and that more fun may be injected into one's studies if one learns the story of the poor peasant who wrote to God for 100 pesos, which he needed. The postmaster felt that this man's faith should be rewarded, took up a collection among postal employees, and sent the man all they could scrape up: 60 pesos. The peasant was not in the least surprised, and wrote back to God: "Thanks for the money, I received only 60 pesos; please send the rest, for I need it. Only this time don't send it through the Post Office, because they are very crooked!"

Persons who have more than a nodding acquaintance with Spanish may find this record of great value; they will surely find it fun.

MISCELLANEOUS

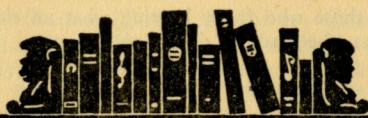


Seeger: Goofing Off Suite. Pete Seeger (banjo, guitar, mandolin, or chālil). 1-10" disc (*FOLK FP-43-2) \$4.25.

Every so often we review a record of, perhaps, questionable permanent merit but which is a lot of musical fun. Such a disc is the present *Goofing Off Suite*, composed (swiped) by folk singer Pete Seeger. But let Pete tell you about it:

"I am in favor of folk musicians swiping tunes from symphonies, just as I am all in favor of symphony composers continuing to swipe folk tunes. In time we may no longer think of different classes of music such as folk music, popular music . . . and classical music. Rather, we are likely to have music for different purposes: lullabies, game songs, marches, music for dancing, love, work, storytelling, for participation, and for listening. Composers, arrangers and performers, whether amateur or professional, will have a vast heritage to draw on in the folk and fine arts music traditions of every continent."

Not a bad philosophy. On this disc you'll hear folk melodies, Berlin tunes, Bach, Beethoven, and lots more. There are LP's of Music for Reading, Music to Make You Misty, and Music to Give You Courage; here's Music for Goofing-Off.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Fabulous Phonograph. By Roland Gelatt. 320 pp. Illustrated. J. B. Lippincott Company (Philadelphia and New York). Price \$4.95.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓢ indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

CHRISTMAS IS with us once again, and at the very outset the editors of THE NEW RECORDS would like to wish each and every reader a very happy Holiday Season and the best of everything in 1956. We surely hope that Santa brings you just the records you want—no duplicates. Thanks for your whole-hearted support throughout these 23 long years; we shall resolve again for the New Year to continue to merit it.

* * *

Emory Cook, for whom we have run out of adjectives, has recently made available through dealers a series of test records for the amateur audiophile. We must preface our remarks with the observation that *very few* persons will find these discs of value other than to satisfy their curiosity. It is of no use to find that your phonograph has over 2% intermodulation distortion if (a) you don't know what intermodulation distortion is or (b) you don't know what to do about it when you find it. However, the amateur audiophile, the hi-fi bug, and the aurally curious will find these discs to be quite useful and/or satisfying for the purposes indicated; we list them below:

N-A Beam Test Record, Series 50. Frequencies from 20,000 cps to 1,000 cps, super-imposed on an "A" (dot-dash) tone. If "A" (dot-dash) is heard, distortion at that frequency is less than 2%; if "N" (dash-dot) is heard, distortion at that frequency is greater than 2%. LP (33-1/3 rpm). Side 1, monaural; side 2, binaural. 1-12" disc, \$4.98.

Frequency and Intermodulation. Provides accurate frequencies at selected intervals from 20 cps to 20,000 cps, with relative voltage chart, which may be checked by placing voltmeter across speaker terminals. 78 rpm, Series 10. 1-10" disc, \$4. LP

(33-1/3 rpm), Series 10LP. 1-10" disc, \$4.98.

Thermal (White) Noise. White noise means random thermal wide-band noise. This disc makes comparisons between white noise and 9,000 cps "grey" noise, 7,000 cps "grey," 80 cps "grey" and 150 cps "grey." If no difference is heard between "white" and "grey" noises, phonograph is not reproducing sounds in excess of the "grey" noise. 78 rpm only, Series 20. 1-10" disc, \$4.

Binaural Test Record. For phonographs with binaural arm only. Provides ticking clock, so that movable cartridge may be adjusted to be in perfect synchronization with fixed cartridge. LP (33-1/3 rpm) only, Series 30. 1-10" disc, \$2.

Complete instructions for the use of each record are printed on the jackets, and we have tried only to indicate the purposes for which each disc is intended. We repeat our caution that unless you have an exceptional interest in phonographs and reproducing equipment, the results obtained by the use of these discs will have very little interest. Also, since these are test records and are designed to ferret out defects in your phonograph, it is entirely possible that they will become damaged, even the first time they are used; therefore these discs are not exchangeable, either at your dealer's or from the factory. They are factory-sealed and are guaranteed perfect when received. The editor of THE NEW RECORDS cannot enter into correspondence concerning these test records. After you secure the records, any questions should be addressed to the maker of them.

If your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to the publisher of THE NEW RECORDS will be filled promptly.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see TNR Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

NOTE: The **Current Market Price** of Westminster 4000- and 5000-series is \$2.99.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning December, 1952 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Massenet: *Manon* (highlights). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Paris Comic Opera—Wolff. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1114) \$3.98. (TNR Dec. '51).

Debussy: *La Mer*. Cleveland Orchestra—Rodzinski. One side, and Enesco: *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1 in A, Op. 11*. And Liszt: *Méphisto Waltz*. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6628) \$1.98. (TNR Feb. '43 & Aug. '47).

Gould: *Serenade of Carols for Small Orchestra*. One side, and Gould: *Suite of Christmas Hymns*. Morton Gould and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6630) \$1.98. (TNR Oct. '50).

Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 5, Op. 47*. Cleveland Orchestra—Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6625) \$1.98. (TNR Oct. '42).

Bizet: *Symphony in C*. One side, and Ibert: *Escales*. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—Rodzinski. And Milhaud: *Suite Française*. N. Y. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra—Milhaud. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6629) \$1.98. (TNR June '46, Nov. '46, & Mar. '46).

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet*. One side, and Tchaikovsky: *Ouverture-Solennelle "1812," Op. 49*. Cleveland Orchestra—Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6626) \$1.98. (TNR Dec. '41 & Oct. '41).

Chopin: *Mazurkas*. Maryla Jonas (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6624) \$1.98. (TNR May '50).

Paganini: *Caprices, Op. 1*. Michael Rabin (violin). (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6633) \$1.98. (TNR Mar. '51).

Columbia Literary Series: W. Somerset Maugham. Maugham reading his own works. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4752) \$4.98. (TNR Nov. '53).

Columbia Literary Series: John Collier. Collier reading his own works. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4754) \$4.98. (TNR Nov. '53).

Columbia Literary Series: John Steinbeck. Steinbeck reading his own works. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4756) \$4.98. (TNR Nov. '53).

Columbia Literary Series: William Saroyan. Saroyan reading and discussing his own works. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4758) \$4.98. (TNR Nov. '53).

Columbia Literary Series: Edna Ferber. Ferber reading her own works. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4762) \$4.98. (TNR Nov. '53).

ORCHESTRA



Bach: (4) *Suites for Orchestra*. English Baroque Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 2-12" discs (*WEST-SWN-18012/3) \$7.96. 2-12" factory-sealed discs in folder (*WEST-WN-2201) \$9.96.

CONTENTS: Suite No. 1 in C & Suite No. 2 in B minor. *WEST-SWN-18012. Suite No. 3 in D & Suite No. 4 in D. *WEST-SWN-18013.

Bach: (4) *Suites for Orchestra*. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35234/5) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3536B) \$9.98.

CONTENTS: Suite No. 1 in C & Suite No. 2 in B minor. (*ANG-35234TP). Suite No. 3 in D & Suite No. 4 in D. (*ANG-35235TP).

With this issue of the four Bach Suites we think Scherchen has achieved his finest phonographic effort. There is a distinction in this issue that places it apart from any of the several other complete issues

on LP. The accuracy and attention to detail, the striving for authenticity and style—all of these never disturb the beauty of the music. There is a warmth and sympathy pervading the music-making that places the mechanical end where it belongs—in obscurity. The music stands forth in beauty and with remarkable clarity. The stateliness, lovely curving melodic lines, graceful dance movements, bright and spritely sections—all follow in a succession of beautiful music that is gratifying and pleasing. The small orchestra of accomplished musicians, reinforced with a harpsichord (well in the background), is guided through stylish performances of this superb music by a Scherchen whom we do not always admire, but whom we are pleased to say has no equal in this music. The reproduction and quiet surfaces are but added blessings to this fine set.

To bestow on this set our highest praise is not only a reflection of the pleasure we received in listening to it. It is also to say that it moved us to the point of enthusiasm which placed it above the work of a favorite conductor of this reviewer, Otto Klemperer, whose complete issue of the *Bach Suites* for Angel is no mean effort. Klemperer has the advantage of the Philharmonia Orchestra, and receives rather larger and plusher reproduction. These factors will be favored by many persons who can be sure of good style and excellent playing as well as good reproduction. Comparison was not made with the Hewitt, Prohaska, or Reiner sets, but memory recalls that they were not measurably superior to either Scherchen or Klemperer. We will recommend either the Westminster or Angel versions, with our preference for Scherchen, who turns in a truly memorable set of performances in these suites. S.

Delibes: Sylvia (ballet suite). One side, and **Delibes: Coppélia** (ballet suite). Members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1913) \$3.98.

Grofé: Grand Canyon Suite. One side, and **Copland: El Salon Mexico**. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1928) \$3.98.

Gluck—arr. Mottl: Ballet Suite No. 1. One side, and **Grétry—arr. Lambert: Ballet Suite**. New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Robert Irving. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1234) \$3.98.

The *Sylvia* and *Coppélia* as directed by Monteux not only effectively replaces the Seitzky version in the RCA catalog, it also replaces all the rest in the LP lists. The only other version of real merit is the Désormière reading on London, which is not as good in reproduction. Monteux bestows dignity to these often-maligned scores, giving these tattered pieces a greatness we seldom realize they have. He elicits playing of a high order from the Boston Orchestra, and the reproduction is excellent. What Monteux does for the *Valse Lente* and *Pizzicati Polka* sections of *Sylvia* is an amazing sample of his great perform-

ances on this disc. Nowhere is there to be found overplaying; it is just good playing. This one gets our four-star rating with ease and with pleasure.

As usual with Fiedler and the Boston Pops, the emphasis is on elegance of reproduction and the clarity of ear-splitting fortissimos rather than on excellence of conducting. For the most part, each of these performances is ordinary as far as the podium is concerned, good as far as the orchestra and the recording engineers are concerned. With Grofé himself, Toscanini, or Kostelanetz from which to choose, Fiedler is fourth on our list in selecting a *Grand Canyon Suite*. Fiedler's reproduction of *El Salon Mexico* is the best available, but not markedly better than Mitchell (*WEST-WL-5286).

The Gluck and Grétry pairing is a happy one, and the first on LP by a major company with good reproduction. How this pair was overlooked until now is strange, for the music is charming and well-liked. Irving is becoming a respected conductor in scores balletic, and this is one of his finest efforts. The present suite of dances in the Grétry was arranged by Constant Lambert from *Zémire et Azor*, *Céphale et Procris*, and *L'Embarras des richesses*, and was used by the Vic-Wells Company for a ballet. Lovely, graceful music, beautifully done. S.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps. RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12 disc (*D-DL-9781) \$3.98.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5, Op. 47. Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18001) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18001) \$4.98.

Both of these new releases present a problem familiar these days to the record reviewer and to the record purchaser. There are now several excellent versions of each work, which fact makes decisions difficult. The average music lover could almost ask for the version by the conductor whom he favors and receive a good disc of the work. Stravinsky's *Sacre* has been well interpreted by Ansermet, Dorati, Monteux, Ormandy, and Steinberg, and is now given a mighty respectable performance by Fricsay. We would not place Fricsay before any of the others, but if the quality of reproduction given him sounds best on your set, you will find this a good disc. The reproduction features the well-rounded sound of Deutsche Grammophon recordings and has an added clarity, power and brilliance sometimes not found on that label. It is most impressive.

Rodzinski has been associated with the Shostakovich *Fifth* since its introduction in this country, and his readings of it are always excellent. Again we find a disc impressive in sound, one of the best symphonic recordings from Westminster. Golschmann, Horenstein and Mitropoulos have also had something to say in recordings of this work. Our

preference remains for the Mitropoulos recording (*C-ML-4739), for he makes this the most thrilling listening, and his orchestra is the best of the lot. Orchestral virtuosity counts heavily in a work such as the *Fifth*, and the New York Philharmonic coupled with Mitropoulos' dynamic interpretation is just unbeatable. We would suggest the present disc only on the basis of reproduction, if that is of paramount importance to you. On most sets, Mitropoulos will sound as good as this one, and we guarantee he will raise the hair on the back of your neck—particularly in the finale. S

Bruckner: Symphony No. 1 in C minor. Vienna Orchestral Society conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN LA-1015) \$3.98.

Brucknerites will be glad to learn of this release, for now recordings of all ten (numbered, oddly enough, from 0 to 9) of his finished symphonies are available. Bruckner wrote eleven, actually, but his initial effort was never published and is available today only in a transcription for piano.

Conductor Hans Richter gets the credit for having "discovered" the score of the *First Symphony*; it was dubbed by the composer, at the time, "*das kecke Beserl*," which his biographer, Engel, has translated "fresh young girlie." Though Bruckner remained a bachelor, he was nearly always "in love" with some pretty girl many years his junior, and he imagined himself as "A regular devil!"

In love Bruckner was when he penned this score; this will be obvious on first hearing. The work is in four movements: Allegro, Adagio, Scherzo and Finale. It is shorter than most other Bruckner symphonies, and its very conciseness gives it more continuity than any of his others. The Wagnerian influence, although it is there, is not nearly so pronounced as in Bruckner's later symphonies; on the other hand, although the work is romantic, it will not remind one of Brahms very much. We welcome the recording to the catalogs and recommend it as a delightful work; and we especially suggest it to those who may have no Bruckner in their libraries, because they were discouraged by the great rambling length of most of the master's symphonies.

F. Charles Adler leads his forces in a fine performance, and Unicorn's superior reproduction is very much in evidence. J.

J. M. Haydn: Symphony in G. One side, and **J. M. Haydn: Concerto in D for Flute and Orchestra.** Vienna Orchestral Society conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN LA-1007) \$3.98.

Haydn: Symphony No. 88 in G, Op. 56, No. 2 ("Letter V"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 101 in D, Op. 95, No. 2** ("Clock"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1199) \$3.98.

Johann Michael Haydn (1737-1806) was a brother of Franz Josef. Like him, he began his musical

career at the cathedral of St. Stephen's, in Vienna, as a choir boy. At the age of 20 he left Vienna to accept the position of *Kapellmeister* to the Bishop of Grosswardein, a post later held by Dittersdorf. Michael wrote many secular and vocal works in Grosswardein, and many of his early works have a brilliance which his more famous brother's music was slow to attain. Mozart often spoke of Michael in his letters, and the latter's influence on Mozart's music is not denied; yet Michael's music is almost never heard, and the present Unicorn disc is one of two containing Michael's works listed in the present issue of the Schwann LP catalog.

The *G major Symphony* could easily be mistaken for one of Franz Josef's works. Baroque in structure, it is a jewel, the facets of which Dr. Adler has polished with loving care. The *Flute Concerto* is equally fine, our only annoyance being with Unicorn for not having supplied the name of the flutist anywhere on label or jacket. During parts of the first movement one can hear the soloist inhaling during some of the rapid passages, which may annoy some persons; for us, it made the performance more human and real, and it may well have been that for the recording engineer to have changed the microphone placement to suppress this breathing would have made the reproduction inferior. In any event, the reproduction is all but perfect—smooth, glassy surfaces and rich, resonant sound.

The fact that we will devote less space to the excellent London disc is no indication of its inferiority—rather that the works are much more well known. And you'll not find superior performances to this pair in the LP catalogs at this writing. We had never seen the name "Letter V" applied to Haydn's 88th Symphony before; London informs us that the Royal Philharmonic Society allotted letters to some of the better-known symphonies because of the confusion in the various systems of numbering Haydn's symphonies—Breitkopf & Hartel number this one 88, but others number it variously 87, 89, and 13. J.

Bartók: Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta.

One side, and **Kodály: Háry János Suite.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by George Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1230) \$3.98.

Ives: Symphony No. 3. One side, and **Donovan: Suite for String Orchestra and Oboe.** Baltimore Little Symphony conducted by Reginald Stewart. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-468) \$4.98.

Bartók's *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* is well played on this disc, but by no means in a manner to efface the readings by Byrns, Kubelik, or von Karajan. Kodály's *Háry János* receives a correct and disciplined reading that does not come near dislodging Ormandy or Dorati. We can rarely enthuse over the work of Solti, a neat, precise conductor who never quite seems to get off the ground. We have yet to hear anything of his that is clearly

the best; he just does not move us. These two works presently under consideration are examples. If one can have a statement of *Háry János* like Ormandy's (*C-ML-4306), why settle for less? Anyone who likes this score wants more spirit and abandon than Solti offers; at least, that is the way we feel about it. Reproduction is excellent on both sides.

A pair of first recordings on LP of compositions by American composers is offered by Vanguard. The disc not only introduces two fine native works, but also the Baltimore Little Symphony (drawn from the regular Baltimore Orchestra) and a fine musician-conductor, Reginald Stewart. Ives, who died in 1954 in his eightieth year, is considered by many to be one of America's greatest composers. It is predicted that this opinion will be solid within a decade or two. We would offer no opposition to this view, for his music has a substance not to be dismissed casually. The *Third*, here recorded with style and polish, is a work not difficult to comprehend. It was written in 1901-4 and employs material previously used by Ives. We would suggest the lovely third movement, *Largo*, as an exceptional example of beautiful music from a serious American composer. Donovan's *Suite* suggests American folk material and is a grateful work for oboe. This is a worthy disc of native music, well played and nicely reproduced. S.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 4 in A minor, Op. 63.

One side, and **Sibelius: Symphony No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 82.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5045) \$4.98.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 82. One and one-half sides, and **Sibelius: Night Ride and Sunrise, Op. 55.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1275) \$3.98.

It would not be too difficult to give Ormandy first place for the *Fifth*, were it not for one flaw—not Ormandy's fault—which is the pre-echo at the very end of the work. Columbia gets the *Fifth* on one side, but in so doing there is a strong, noticeable, and mighty annoying pre-echo between all of those widely spaced and dramatic final chords at the end of the last movement which practically wipes out the cumulative effect of the entire work. To add mechanical insult to mechanical injury, on the other side of the disc there is something funny during the third movement of the *Fourth*, when suddenly everything stops—even tape hiss, surface noise, and apparently everything is at a standstill for a few instants—then picks up and continues; a bad tape splice no doubt, but hardly expected from Columbia. Assuming Columbia were to repent these sins of commission and re-master these sides, we would then be inclined to rate the Ormandy disc as close to the best you could want in both symphonies. The quality of recorded sound is beautiful indeed, and the Philadelphia Orchestra plays with a perfection

as well as a tonal beauty not matched by other groups who have recorded either of these symphonies recently. An exception could be the Philharmonia-Von Karajan readings; however, Ormandy has the better of it in interpretation.

The Collins *Fifth* is not far behind Ormandy's in matters of interpretation, but it has not the orchestral playing of the Philadelphians, nor is the reproduction as good. We are back to thin string tone and a generally nasal recorded sound that no amount of tone-controlling would eliminate; however there is no pre-echo in the last movement, for London has that on the next side, widely spaced. So each disc has an "if." Ormandy's is excellent in every way except two mechanical annoyances (which may be corrected). Collins' is good and a recommended buy if you prefer the *Night Ride* to the sombre *Fourth*, provided the reproduction does not sound thin on your phonograph. S.

The Brave Bulls! Banda Taurina of the Plaza Mexico, conducted by Genaro Nunez. 1-12" disc in folder (*AUDIO FIDELITY AFLP-1801) \$5.95.

Corrida! Madrid Bullfight Band and Spanish Air Force Military Band conducted by Commander Manuel G. de Arriba. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9764) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: (6) Marches (Air Force Band); (6) Pasodobles (Bullfight Band).

Castles in Spain. Orquesta Zarzuela de Madrid conducted by Frederico Moreno Torroba. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9763) \$3.98.

The Brave Bulls! is an LP disc containing music of the bull fight ring, played by the Banda Taurina of the world's largest Plaza de Toros, the Plaza Mexico. One doesn't have to be an aficionado of bull fights to appreciate the music; it is enjoyable by itself, and if you wish to know what it all means, there are adequate notes translated, regrettably, by a Mexican whose command of English was only a little better than our command of Spanish. Primarily, however, this disc is an example of high fidelity reproduction *par excellence*—you have to hear it to believe it! The manufacturer claims a frequency range of 16 to 25,000 cycles per second; it may very well be this great; but in any case it is very wide range even if these figures are exaggerated a little.

Decca's disc of bull fight music is Spanish, rather than Mexican, and is divided so that one side is all marches and the other side all pasodobles—the pasodobles are the music played during the actual fight. This side of Decca's record is complete with "Ole's" and other shouts of encouragement—quite exciting, if you like bull fights.

Leaving the Plaza de Toro, we return to the music of the Spanish theatre, with nine dances, overtures, and zarzuela tunes which have gained a strong foothold in this country, judging from the sales of discs of this type. Here is romantic, sprightly music

which could be used either for pleasant listening or for background music.

Famous Gypsy Melodies. Kocze Antal and his Gypsy Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9190) \$2.98.

Famous Gypsy Melodies (Vol. 2). Kocze Antal and his Gypsy Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9191) \$2.98.

Gypsy Moods. Eddie Csoka and his Gypsy Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-7035) \$3.95.

These are just the sort of discs you might like as background music for a cocktail or dinner party—lots of violin music, none of it too loud. We don't know why Eddie (or Edi; the name is spelled both ways on the jacket and labels of this disc) Csoka is worth a dollar more than Kocze Antal; neither the reproduction nor playing is any better on the Vanguard disc.

Christmas Carols. Mantovani and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-913) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *The First Nowell*; *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*; *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*; *White Christmas*; *Good King Wenceslas*; *O Holy Night*; *Adeste Fideles*; *Joy to the World*; *Silent Night*; *Holy Night*; *O Tannenbaum*; *Midnight Waltz*; *Nazareth*; *O Little Town of Bethlehem*; *Skaters' Waltz*.

Although this disc was issued last year, it was a last-minute entry, and the review copy arrived too late for inclusion in the December 1954 issue. We hope our readers will not mind its inclusion in the present issue, for it is one of the few discs offering Christmas Carols in orchestral arrangements; it would be our choice for a record of Carols so arranged. We rather suspect one could overlook the inclusion of *White Christmas*, *Midnight Waltz*, and *Skaters' Waltz*.

With the plethora of discs available of Christmas Music, we hope our selections listed below will be of some help to perplexed purchasers: (Carols sung) Robert Shaw, Vol. I (*V-LM-1112, \$3.98); (Carols on organ) Leonard MacLain (*VALDO-RAY 101, \$3); (Carols by orchestra) Mantovani (see heading above); (Some Carols not so familiar) Trapp Family (*D-DL-9553, \$3.98); Dickens' *Christmas Carol*—Lionel Barrymore (*MGM-E-3222, \$3.98); and if anyone wishes Carols by a band, there is always the Deutschmeister Band (*WEST-WL-5300; Current Market Price, \$2.99).

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92. Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6622) \$1.98.

Haydn: Symphony No. 94 in G ("Surprise"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 101 in D** ("Clock"). Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6621) \$1.98.

A plague on record companies who withhold neces-

sary information from critics. Ten Columbia-Entré records were submitted for review this month; no word on the jackets, nor any in the accompanying notes, indicated which, if any, were new recordings, nor which were re-issues of earlier records. Seven of these discs you'll find listed under NEW LP RELEASES in this issue; one is Vivaldi's *Gloria Mass*; and here are the other two. Why can't you say these are new recordings, Columbia?

Nevertheless, these two LP discs are more than bargains—they are very fine recordings. Erich Leinsdorf and the well-rehearsed Rochester Philharmonic render thoughtful readings which compare very favorably with higher-priced versions.

Sir Thomas. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5029) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Timoléon Overture*, *Le Trésor Supposé*—*Overture* (Méhul); *Air de Ballet* (Crétry); *Le Chasse de Jeune Henri*—*Overture* (Méhul); *Overture in D* (Boccherini); *Tragic Overture*, Op. 81 (Brahms); *Coriolan Overture*, Op. 62 (Beethoven).

Columbia need hardly have issued a special record to honor the name of Sir Thomas Beecham; his name is known wherever fine orchestral records are bought. However, we are delighted that Columbia decided to do so, for here is a wonderfully charming record of six overtures and Crétry's *Air de Ballet* which should please many, many persons, including Sir Thomas' great host of fans.

CONCERTO



Paganini: Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 6. One side, and **Glazounov: Concerto in A minor, Op. 81.** Michael Rabin (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Lovro von Matacic. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35259TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35259) \$4.98.

Paganini: Concerto No. 4 in D minor. Arthur Grumiaux (violin) with l'Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Franco Gallini. One side, and **Paganini: Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 6.** Herman Krebbers (violin) with the Hague Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Willem van Otterloo. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3143) \$4.98.

Paganini: Concerto No. 1 in E-flat, Op. 6. One side, and **Paganini: Concerto No. 2 in B minor, Op. 7.** Ruggiero Ricci (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1215) \$3.98.

The almost legendary figure of Paganini casts a long shadow over the history of music; and now, some one hundred fifteen years after his death, come five performances of three of his concerti for the twentieth century music lover's consideration. There are three performances of the *First Concerto*, a work that, in many ways, is the epitome of Pagi-

nini, both as man and artist. The three different recordings and performances pose a pretty question: who is right? Whose edition is correct? Or, perhaps, who comes closest to Paganini's intentions? The London version claims to be "complete" except for the exclusion of several orchestral tutti; no mention is made by either Angel or Epic as to edition or arrangement, but both are the same. The London recording contains more material, notably a delightful section in the third movement, omitted by both Angel and Epic. There are also some radical differences in the first movement between London's and the other two.

Now, as to performance: young Michael Rabin has the best tone and intonation of the three, although Ricci's leaner tone, if contemporary reports of Paganini's playing are accurate, is a closer approach to the great Italian master's playing than the others. Ricci also plays with more abandon, more dash and fire, although sometimes at the expense of accuracy. Krebbers is more deliberate and consequently less exciting than either of the others.

Second sides could readily be a deciding factor. Angel offers the most satisfactory version of the Glazounov *Concerto* on records. London has a hair-raising version of the Paganini *B minor Concerto*, with its famous *ronde à la clochettes*; and Epic has a first recording of the newly "discovered" *Fourth Concerto*. This is the concerto Paganini played only once, in Paris; it was supposed to be reserved for the Parisians. The score was lost and recently discovered. Grumiaux plays it with considerable élan. Musically it is of the same high calibre as numbers One and Two; but, while it is very tuneful, it does not have the fiendish technical difficulties of its predecessors.

The palm for recorded sound goes to Angel, with London and Epic tied for a very close second. Best package is Epic's, although the notes are confined to a recounting of the "discovery" of the *D minor Concerto*. There is also a reprint of Berlioz' article on Paganini, taken from *Soirées d'Orchestre*, along with contemporary drawings and pictures. A very tasteful issue, although the price has been increased to cover. There is nothing outstanding about the London or Angel jackets.

W.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Brahms: String Quartets (complete). Three and one-half sides, and **Haydn: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 33, No. 2**. ("The Joke"). Budapest String Quartet. 2-12" discs in box (*C-SL-225) \$9.96.

CONTENTS: *Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 51, No. 1*; *Quartet in A, Op. 51, No. 2*; *Quartet in B-flat, Op. 67*.

The String Quartets of Johannes Brahms have never reached the degree of popularity of those of Beethoven or Haydn. Musicologists far more eminent than we could probably give us a string of reasons for this fact as long as our arm. One rather

obvious reason calls to mind the old answer Moran and Mack ("The Black Crows") used to make to explain why the white horses ate more than the black horses: "We couldn't figgah no reason, 'less'n it was dat dey was mo' of de white ho'ses." There are more Haydn Quartets, and more Beethoven Quartets than there are of Brahms'; *ergo*, Haydn and Beethoven seem to be more popular.

This doesn't satisfy us, however. It seems to us that Brahms' Quartets just don't wear well. No matter how fine or wonderful the music, there will come a point of saturation in any listener, beyond which he can't take any more at one hearing. It seems that this point is reached more quickly with Brahms' Quartets than with either Haydn's or Beethoven's. Is this a valid test? Should we criticize music by charting a graph of interest vs. time?

We cannot say. Put on Brahms' *First Quartet in C minor*. It will quite charm and captivate you. Now the *A major*; still pretty good. By the time we were half way through the *B-flat major Quartet*, we'd had quite enough of Brahms for this afternoon. But not too much chamber music; Haydn's little "Joke" tasted delicious—and the Finale, which ends "on the upbeat," was highly amusing.

Nevertheless, we could not possibly give this fine set an unfavorable review; for collectors of Brahms and of chamber music will surely want these definitive performances of Brahms' String Quartets done to perfection by the justly-famed Budapest Quartet. Played one at a sitting, they are excellent; the whimsical bachelor knew a good tune when he found it, and his working of the themes is typical and sprightly. The last side filler, Haydn's "Joke" in *B-flat*, is a pleasant little dividend.

J.

Janáček: Concertino. Rudolf Firkusny (piano), the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet, and assisting artists from the Philadelphia Orchestra. One side, and **Janáček: Mladi** ("Youth Suite," 1924). Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet with Leon Lester (bass clarinet). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4995) \$4.98.

It is to be doubted that the music of Leo Janáček will ever achieve any great popularity in this country. It is nationalistic in the extreme and requires a great understanding of the Czech folk idiom; Smetana and Dvořák wrote of Czech culture, but in an absolute way which broke down nationalistic barriers. One previous recording of each of these works exists, both obviously outclassed by the present one. Modern chamber music which will require considerable study and patience is offered here; performance and reproduction-wise, it is highly recommended.

Boccherini: (4) Quartets. New Music Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5047) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Quartets in B minor, Op. 58, No. 4*; in *B-flat, Op. 1, No. 2*; in *E-flat, Op. 40, No. 2*; in *E-flat, Op. 58, No. 2*.

Lovely melodies of baroque Italian chamber music flow from this disc like sparkling red wine; it is one

which anyone may enjoy, yet he will receive additional pleasure from each repeated hearing. Delightful!

CHORAL



Haydn: Die Schöpfung ("The Creation") (complete). (Sung in German). Anton Dermota (tenor); Teresa Stich-Randall, Anny Felbermayer (sopranos); Paul Schoeffler (baritone); Frederick Guthrie (bass); the Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 2-12" discs in album (*VAN-VRS-471/2) \$9.96.

In an essay on the paintings of Goya, Aldous Huxley writes very entertainingly, although seriously, on the subject of an anthology of Later Works (i.e., Beethoven's last quartets, Shakespeare's *Tempest*, etc.). To be sure, in the course of his discussion he debars Haydn's last works from such an anthology ("Haydn lived to a ripe old age, and his right hand never forgot its cunning; but it also failed to learn a new cunning"); but this is only one man's opinion. Certainly *Die Schöpfung*, while very different from the late Beethoven, Verdi or Rembrandt, is still magnificent music with its full share of the non-human and unearthly characteristics that distinguish the other men's Late Works.

This sudden disagreement on your servant's part with his favorite author has been brought about by Mogens Wöldike's inspired and enlightened reading of the music as recorded by Vanguard. The forces at his disposal are of the best; Miss Stich-Randall sings the music allotted to Gabriel (*On mighty pens and With verdure clad*) like the angel she represents. Frederick Guthrie (Raphael) shows to better advantage here than in last month's *Lord Nelson Mass* and does a magnificent job—particularly in the wonderful recitative that describes the creation of the animals, insects and *das Gewurm*. Anton Dermota (Uriel) has never sung better and the moving and beautiful *Mit Wurd und Hoheit* ("In Native worth") has the success it deserves. Anny Felbermayer and Paul Schoeffler sing the music of Adam and Eve like the excellent artists they are.

Despite the excellences of the singers, chorus and orchestra, one feels that the undeniable success of the performance is due almost entirely to the very obvious strength, knowledge and insight of Mogens Wöldike. His is a classical eighteenth century style, crystal-clear, unhurried and essentially musical. As the performance unfolds, Mogens Wöldike seems to hold each section up for the listener's approval, as a jeweler might exhibit precious stones. It is, beyond a doubt, one of the most amazing performances on records.

Vanguard has supplied gorgeous sound, a cover by Rockwell Kent, copious notes by H. Robbins Landon and the complete German-English texts. Fortunate indeed is he who finds this set under his Christmas tree.

W.

Christmas in Sweden. Choral and instrumental songs and dances. 1-10" disc (*L-WB-91046) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: (3) Christmas Songs; *A Rhapsody of Christmas Dances*; (5) Traditional Swedish Dances.

Greetings from Sweden. Choral and instrumental songs and dances. 1-10" disc (*L-WB-91047) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: (4) Songs for Christmas Morning; *We Are Going To Have a Merry Ball*.

Christmas Songs. Obernkirchen Children's Choir directed by Edith Möller. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65021) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Adeste Fideles*; *Schlittenfahrt* ("Sleigh Ride"); *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen*; *Un Flambeau*, *Jeannette*, *Isabella*; *Fum, Fum, Fum*; *Auf dem Berge, da wehet der Wind*; *Deck the Halls*; *Jingle Bells*; *Kling, Glockchen*; *Süsser die Glocken nie klingen*; *El Pequeno Zagal*; *Canzone d'i Zampognari*; *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht*.

There are always a flock of new records for Christmas which contain the same old (and beloved) carols; but here is a trio of discs which contain some practically unknown (at least in this country) Christmas numbers, along with some familiar carols by the Obernkirchen Children's Choir.

None of the Swedish numbers were at all familiar to us; yet we found them perfectly enchanting little songs and dances, done, no doubt, in the proper spirit. Perhaps persons of Swedish descent will recognize them at once; but anyone may enjoy them.

The by now well-known Obernkirchen Choir here performs a baker's dozen songs and carols in English, German, French, Italian, Spanish and Latin—six certainly are among the best-known carols, and seven are not so familiar. This heart-warming bunch of youngsters exhibits thorough training, and turn each number into a gleaming light; warmly recommended.

Rachmaninoff: The Bells, Op. 35. Frances Yeend (soprano); David Lloyd (tenor); Mack Harrell (baritone); Temple University Choir directed by Elaine Brown; and the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. One and one-half sides, and **Rachmaninoff: The Isle of the Dead, Op. 29.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5043) \$4.98.

Last February the identical forces which made the present record performed *The Bells* in the Academy of Music, Philadelphia; we can only presume that this disc was cut at that time. To say that the performance was well received would be an understatement; local record shops sold completely out of a previous recording (the only one available at the time) by Rachmaninoff Society, featuring inferior soloists and a so-so orchestra. All we can say to

Columbia is, "It's about time!"

Rachmaninoff received his inspiration for this work from Balmont's translation (into Russian) of Poe's *The Bells*. He had already sketched the plan for a symphony when an anonymous letter called his attention to the suitability of Poe's verses for a musical setting. "I read the enclosed verses," Rachmaninoff later recounted, reported by Oskar von Riesemann, "and decided at once to use them for a Choral Symphony . . . This composition, on which I worked with feverish ardor, is still the one I like best of all my works . . ."

If you will recall Poe's poem, there are four verses, corresponding to the four movements of Rachmaninoff's Symphony: tinkling bells, suggestive of birth; golden wedding bells; alarm bells of terror and fright; and tolling iron bells, funereal and final. Rachmaninoff has identified each movement with the life thread of man: birth, marriage, hardship of life, and death. The work is stark; it demands one's attention; it is, by turns, somber, thrilling, joyous, eerie, boisterous, pensive. *The Bells* is truly a great work, deserving of a wide hearing; and it will give the hearer an insight into Rachmaninoff's mind that he will get in no other way.

Miss Yeend, Messrs. Lloyd and Harrell, the Temple University Choir and the renowned Philadelphia Orchestra sing and play as a unit; you will seldom hear so perfect a recording. Eugene Ormandy, one of the Russian's greatest admirers, has welded the forces into an inspired whole, dominated by a sincere feeling for Rachmaninoff's music. *The Isle of the Dead* is a most appropriate last side filler. Here is a recording which was worth waiting for.

J.

Vivaldi: Gloria Mass. (Sung in Latin). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra da Camera of the Scuola di Arzignano conducted by Antonio Pellizzari. One side, and **Vivaldi: Concerto San Lorenzo in C.** Orchestra da Camera of the Scuola di Arzignano conducted by Antonio Pellizzari. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-6632) \$1.98.

Vivaldi's *Gloria Mass* seems to be hanging on to the LP catalog with great tenacity, for as one version is dropped, another pops up. One of the very earliest LP's was the Vox version. It was superseded by Westminster's (*WEST-WL-5287, TNR Nov. '54); it was reviewed favorably, but now Westminster has announced the discontinuance of the entire WL-5000 series (thus the Current Market Price of \$2.99, until they are gone). Accordingly, we welcome this Columbia-Entré disc to the catalogs.

This joyous, baroque work was evidently written by Vivaldi for some special occasion, for it is not, properly speaking, a mass. The present artists will be unknown to most Americans; nevertheless they are more than satisfactory, and this little disc will prove to be a worthy replacement for its predecessors.

Vivaldi's "Concerto San Lorenzo," like many of his works, is really a "Concerto Grosso" or a "Con-

certo for Orchestra." This is the only available recording of it at present; we love this sort of music, and so we recommend the present disc very highly.

The Story of Christmas. Epic Choir directed by Peter Sozio, with instrumental accompaniment. 1-12" disc (*EPIC LC-3144) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: O Come, O Come Emmanuel; O Come All Ye Faithful; O Little Town of Bethlehem; The First Nowell; We Three Kings; Away in a Manger; What Child Is This?; Silent Night, Holy Night; Angels We Have Heard on High (In Excelsis Deo); Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Cantique de Noël (O Holy Night); Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming; Good King Wenceslas; Deck the Hall; Good Christian Men, Rejoice; God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen; It Came upon the Midnight Clear; Joy to the World.

The appeal of this LP record will be the beautiful packaging. The cover is a folder, and there are two extra pages bound into it, containing reproductions in full color of paintings by Raphael, Sassetta, Van Der Weyden, and several others. The Epic Choir sings well; the carols selected are well known; and the reproduction is really hi-fi.



OPERA

Mozart: Don Giovanni (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Vienna State Opera Chorus and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 4-12" discs in album with complete score (*L-XLLA-34) \$19.92.

Don Giovanni Cesare Siepi (bs)
Leporello Fernando Corena (bs)
Don Ottavio Anton Dermota (t)
Commendatore Kurt Böhm (bs)
Donna Anna Suzanne Danco (s)
Donna Elvira Lisa Della Casa (s)
Zerlina Hilde Gueden (s)
Masetto Walter Berry (bs)

The late Olin Downes once said, regarding musical criticism, that it was not "a judgment, but rather one listener's reaction to the performance; an informed reaction, but still subjective." This is about as accurate a description of criticism as this writer has come across, and it is quoted here as a sort of *apologia* as having definite bearing on the present review of Mozart's incomparable *Don Giovanni*.

One might begin by stating that this technically superb recording, with its virtually "all-star" cast, will probably delight and satisfy ninety per cent of the opera lovers who have been waiting for a modern recording of the complete *Don Giovanni*. Certainly a listing of the set's many merits is impressive. To begin with, every member of the cast is a first class singer—Siepi is a sonorous-voiced Don who gives an extrovert performance. Corena, a delightful buffo,

delivers a straight-forward characterization of the rascally Leporello. Dermota is a stylish Don Ottavio; and Berry, a thoroughly rustic and convincing Masetto. The Commendatore of Kurt Böhme is somewhat light-voiced. The ladies are also excellent. Mlle. Danco is a fine Donna Anna and delivers her principal aria, *Or sai che l'onore*, with fire and expression. Lisa della Casa surprises as Elvira—surprising on the pleasant side, that is; her performance is one of the best in the set. Hilda Gueden sounds a perfectly delightful Zerlina, and the writer is sure her stage performance must be utterly devastating. The fine Vienna Philharmonic sound is very much in evidence and is an unalloyed joy to hear.

Now, what about the ten per cent who won't be entirely satisfied with the performance? Well, the first stumbling block is the use of a bass for Don Giovanni instead of the baritone Mozart calls for—and the combination of three basses (the Don, Leporello and Il Commendatore) spoils the opening scene and also detracts considerably from the finale (banquet scene). The second flaw, if such it may be designated, is that conductor Krips has had neither the time nor opportunity to weld his singers into a homogeneous ensemble—there are passages that could be sung with more understanding and expression. Finally, there will be those, like the writer, who cut their Mozart eyeteeth on the Glyndebourne *Don Giovanni*—it seems silly, but one almost wishes, at times, that it had never been made, for it set such a high standard of excellence; and now, one finds himself making reservations about a really fine *Don Giovanni*, such as this London recording.

London, in addition to a very excellent engineering job, has also supplied not just a libretto, but the complete vocal score. This *Don Giovanni*, then, should satisfy all but a few die-hards. W.

R. Strauss: *Ariadne auf Naxos* (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35222/4) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3532C/L) \$15.98.

The ComposerIrmgard Seefried (s)
The TenorRudolf Schock (t)
The Dancing MasterHugues Cuenod (t)
ZerbinettaRita Streich (s)
Prima DonnaElisabeth Schwarzkopf (s)
The Major Domo ..Alfred Neugebauer (speaking)

For admirers of the art of the late Richard Strauss, this deluxe recording of *Ariadne auf Naxos* will be welcome indeed, for it would be difficult to imagine a more plush performance. The presence of two of Europe's leading prima donnas, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Irmgard Seefried, along with Rita Streich and Rudolf Schock, insures its vocal success, while Herbert von Karajan, who seems to grow in musical stature by leaps and bounds, directs the proceedings so that the thinly constructed score sounds its best.

Ariadne auf Naxos had its premier in 1912 with

a youthful and extremely beautiful Maria Jeritza as Ariadne and Hermann Jadowker as Bachaus. Due to the length of the festivities on that occasion, brought about by the peculiar plan of tying the opera in with Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, the opera did not have too great a success because it came too late in the evening (or too early in the morning!). *Ariadne* was later rewritten, and all references to the Molière play were deleted; since then the work has enjoyed a pretty good degree of popularity in Europe. It is in this revised form (i.e. a prologue and one act) that it is here recorded.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, as the Prima Donna (later Ariadne), gives a fine performance—hard, brittle and, towards the close, a very human characterization. Irmgard Seefried, as the put-upon composer, also sings with style and feeling. Zerbinetta, in the person of Mlle. Streich, has some of the score's most formidable music to sing and comes through with flying colors. Rudolf Schock also gives a well-rounded performance. Special mention must be made of Herr Alfred Neugebauer, who has the speaking role of the Major Domo—he is priceless in his pomposity and condescension to the "artists."

Libretto, notes and pictures, stylish package are all in Angel's best manner. The set is recommended for all Strauss devotees and might well repay investigation by those who are always looking for "something just a little bit different." W.

Mozart: *Don Giovanni* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Vienna Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Choir conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 3-12" discs in album (*EPIC SC-6010) \$14.94.

Don GiovanniGeorge London (bt)
LeporelloWalter Berry (bs)
Don OttavioLeopold Simoneau (t)
CommendatoreLudwig Weber (bs)
Donna AnnaHilda Zadek (s)
Donna ElviraSena Jurinac (s)
ZerlinaGraziella Sciutti (s)
MasettoEberhard Wächter (bs)

NOTE: This Epic recording arrived at the studio just before we went to press, after the review of London's *Don Giovanni* was written. We do not recall ever having run separate reviews of the same major work in the same issue before, but it was either that or postpone the present review until January. We hope our readers will concur in our action taken. Ed.

This month's second *Don Giovanni* arrived a few days ago and, as the reader might expect, it was greeted suspiciously and somewhat sourly by your humble servant. These defense mechanisms, however, proved to be unnecessary—on the contrary this *Don Giovanni* turned out to be one after the writer's own heart! To be sure there have been better voices in many of the roles, but this performance comes very close, in spirit, to the touchstone: the Glyndebourne production.

George London, while more bass than baritone, still manages to prove a very effective Don. His voice lacks the smoothness, polish and classic elegance one is accustomed to, although heaven knows that Don Giovanni, while a "nobleman," was also a rough-neck! Leopold Simoneau's superb tenor makes him a superior Don Ottavio, masculine, typically Spanish in his vocal bearing; thus he carries out Mozart's and Ponte's conception of the character. Walter Berry is a natural Leporello—sly, scheming, craven, always the opportunist—all the facets of his complex make-up are fully realized. Vocally, of course, he is ideally suited to the part. The Masetto of Eberhard Wächter is also a first-class performance, and the same applies to the Commendatore of the veteran Ludwig Weber.

The ladies (bless them) also do yeoman work. Hilda Zadek works overly hard as Donna Anna, but her performance "comes off" as they say, and is a fine one. Sena Jurinac is a sympathetic and convincing Donna Elvira, always vocally sure and in character. Graziella Sciutti is a very real Zerlina, captivating and feminine.

But rather than single out individuals one is forced to look at (or listen to) this *Don Giovanni* as a whole. It is obviously well rehearsed and is imbued with a true Mozart style (Epic's Bernhard Paumgartner at work here, one is sure) and the resultant *esprit de corps* is superbly held together by Rudolf Moralt, who proves himself a fine conductor in this instance.

In closing, the writer can not resist a quote from Dr. Paumgartner's informative notes in support of his insistence of a baritone for the title role. The original Don, presumably selected by Mozart himself, is described thus: "The title role was sung by Luigi Bassi . . . who was only 21 years of age at the time, a boyish rogue, with a clear *baritone voice merging towards that of a tenor*. (The italics are ours).

This set, economically contained on three discs, has very fine sound, an interesting and learned essay on the opera and a libretto with an execrable English translation, the only sour note in the package. This might very well be the recorded performance of *Don Giovanni* of the *Anno Mozartiano*. W.

Strauss: Die Fledermaus (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus and Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35263/4TP) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3539B/L) \$10.98.

Gabriel von Eisenstein Nicolai Gedda (t)
 Rosalinde Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (s)
 Alfred Helmut Krebs (t)
 Adele Rita Streich (s)
 Dr. Falke Erich Kunz (bt)
 Prince Orlofsky Rudolf Christ (t)

Angel's contribution to the record public's holi-

day (particularly New Year's Eve) enjoyment is a brilliant recording of Strauss' champagne opera, *Die Fledermaus*. The cast, drawn from the finest singers on Angel's roster, is a fine one. As Eisenstein, Nicolai Gedda has a role tailor-made for his light musical tenor, and he makes the most of Strauss' lilting melodies. Helmut Krebs, as Alfred, is also happily cast and gives a genuinely Viennese performance that has flavor and character. A very interesting and novel bit of casting finds tenor Rudolf Christ as Prince Orlofsky. This is a role usually sung by a mezzo-soprano, but Herr Christ makes quite a part of it—he is *blasé*, worldly wise and very cynical, in addition to being selfish and careless of others. The character, in his hands, becomes a major one. Fortunately, it is to him that one of the big plums in the score falls, the inimitable *Ich lade gern mir Gäste ein*, with its refrain of *chacun à son goût*. Dr. Falke, Lawyer Blind and Jailer Frank are excellently sung; particularly meritorious is Erich Kunz' delineation of the good Doctor—he is a fine artist who always gives a stylish performance. The ladies, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Rita Streich, need no introduction—both are top flight singers who seldom, if ever, let one down. Certainly they are in fine form here and contribute a great deal to the listener's enjoyment of the music by their intelligent and humorous performances.

Angel is to be congratulated on making available a *Fledermaus* that has nearly all the spoken dialog included. The operetta makes a lot more sense this way, and the involved plot is very easy to follow (thanks to the good libretto and clear diction of the principals). An interesting inclusion is the speaking part of Rosalinda's sister Ida—a 19th century gold-digger if there ever were one. Herbert von Karajan's direction is good, and the recorded sound is fine.

If this set does not quite have the full Viennese atmosphere and treatment of the earlier London set, it does have superior sound and is more complete. W.

Verdi: La Forza del Destino (highlights). (Sung in Italian). Zinka Milanov (soprano); Jan Peerce (tenor); Leonard Warren, Raymond Keast (baritones); Nicola Moscona (bass); The Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw; and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Celini and Jonel Perlea. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1916) \$3.98.

Some thirty or forty years ago a type of phonograph record known as *Gems from . . .* was very popular. Such a disc would usually feature a half dozen or so tunes from the opera in question, very much cut but, nonetheless, invariably well sung, usually in English. The disc flourished largely in the gaslight and acoustical era and served as an introduction to opera for countless youngsters and grown-ups. The writer can remember, with a goodly degree of nostalgia, a black label 12" record of *Gems*

from *Faust* coupled with *Gems from Rigoletto* as sung by the Victor Grand Opera Co.

The phonograph has grown up now, so we no longer have four or eight minutes of *Gems*—rather we have *Highlights*. No longer are the singers anonymous—they are among the best available; and, of course, complete versions of the arias, duets and concerted numbers are given.

An outstanding example of this sort of disc is the present "Highlights from *La Forza del Destino*." RCA Victor has arranged the disc partly from some earlier tapes (the Leonard Warren's *Morir, tremenda cosa; Urna fatale; and E s'altra prova*) were originally issued as part of the 78 rpm album DM-1426, while Mme. Milanov's *Madre pietosa; La vergine degli angeli; and Pace, pace mio Dio* were previously issued on (*V-LM-1777). New, however, are Mme. Milanov's first act aria *Mi pellegrina ed orfana*, Jan Peerce's *O tu ch'en seno agli angeli*, and the three concerted numbers: *Solenne in quest'ora; Invano Alvaro; and the finale Io muojo! Confessione!* All this music finds the principals in fine voice. Jan Peerce is a passionate Don Alvaro and Zinka Milanov's Leonore has been admired in these columns before. Leonard Warren does some of his best singing to date as the vengeful Don Carlo on this record; in fact, the expressiveness of the three principals is something seldom encountered in operatic performances in this country, where singers and conductors usually shy away from anything resembling a purple patch.

RCA Victor's usual high quality sound is very much in evidence and that, coupled with its modest price just about makes the disc a must for all opera lovers.

W.

VOCAL



Songs of Wales. Brychan Powell (tenor) with strings of the Orchestra of Wales conducted by David Ffrangcon-Thomas. 1-10" disc (*DELYSE EC-3134) \$4.

Welsh Folk Music. Osian Ellis (harp and vocals) and David Ffrangcon-Thomas (violin/cello). 1-10" disc (*DELYSE EC-3133) \$4.

Warlock: The Curlew. Alexander Young (tenor) with Lionel Solomon (flute), Peter Graeme (English horn) and the Sebastian String Quartet. One side, and **Warlock: (12) Songs.** Alexander Young (tenor) accompanied by Gordon Watson (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18022) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18022) \$4.98.

Older record collectors undoubtedly remember Evan Williams, an American tenor of Welsh extraction, who sang in oratorio and recorded numerous Welsh songs for the then Victor Talking Machine Company. The writer remembers, as a child, being puzzled by such record labels as *Y Deryn Pur, Yn*

iach i ti Gymru and *O, Na byddai'n hof o hyd*. Now here they are again, along with some others, in a collection of Welsh folk songs and some arrangements of traditional music for harp. Brychan Powell is the capable tenor and accompaniments (harp and strings) are furnished by Osian Ellis. The second disc, *Welsh Folk Music*, contains on the first side what might be considered a suite for harp and 'cello based on traditional Welsh folk airs. It is admirably played and is hauntingly beautiful music. The other side features Osian Ellis singing four nursery songs, two folk songs and a group of *Penillion*. These latter are extemporized or set verses sung to an original counterpoint woven around some traditional melody, played in a harmonized version by the harpist (a Welsh jam session?). It is quite a feat, and the results are not so formidable as one might expect. They are, in fact, very tuneful and well worth many hearings. Only fair recording in the *Songs of Wales*, excellent for *Welsh Folk Music*.

Peter Warlock (Philip Heseltine) has been called "one of the most significant English musical figures;" his early and tragic death "cost England one of her finest . . . musicologists and a composer of scarcely revealed genius. . . ." This is the first LP recording of *The Curlew*, a work described as "one of the most notable examples of contemporary chamber music." *The Curlew* is based on four poems by Yeats: *He reproves the curlew; The lover mourns for the loss of love; The withering of the boughs; and He hears the cry of the sedge*. The performance here is evocative and sensitive, but one realizes that more than a single hearing is required fully to learn and appreciate the idiom. The *Twelve Songs* on the other side are more straightforward, more melodious. Tenor Alexander Young sings extremely well, with sensibility and excellent diction. Good sound. W.

Schubert: Die Winterreise. Hans Hotter (baritone) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 2-12" discs (*ANG-35160/1) \$6.48. 2-12" factory-sealed discs in album (*ANG-3521/3S) \$7.98.

This is Hans Hotter's second time around with Schubert's immortal *Die Winterreise*, his first recording appearing in November 1951 on the Decca label. The review, at that time, stated that although his performance was mannered, it was still a good one.

In the intervening four years (or more) Hans Hotter has undoubtedly grown artistically, and this new recording of the song cycle is a superior one. Hotter's approach is simple. He assumes that here we have what has been aptly described as "the most heart rending, pathetically inspired songs known to music," and consequently his singing is marked by a lovely *mezzo-voce*, deliberate *tempi* and, most important, excellent diction and care for the meaning of the words.

The care spent on expressiveness is well rewarded—just consider the story of the cycle—Schubert draws for us "a traveller, a rejected lover, leaving

his dear one's town, out into the snowy hills and frosty paths. Time passes and he travels far, but his mood, instead of lightening, grows only more desolate: here and there a sprig of comfort seems to promise relief, but it brings greater heartache in its train; sometimes kindly death seems near, but the bitter force of life is stronger. At last, in *Die Nebensonnen*, his mind gives way, and in the last song we leave him begging a penniless organ-grinder for companionship." Now, these are not the kinds of songs that can be sung in a cursory manner—it is difficult to project the many emotions Schubert and the poet Müller have captured, but Hotter, with a great deal of insight, manages to realize all the conflicting feelings and sentiment without once spilling over into maudlin sentimentality. It is a mature and poetic performance.

Angel's sound and Gerald Moore's accompaniments are very fine, indeed. A booklet giving the texts and translations is also furnished. W.



ORGAN

Couperin: Messe Solennelle. Gaston Litaize, playing the organ of Saint-Merri. 1-12" disc (*L-DTL-93039) \$4.98.

Bach Organ Works. Gaston Litaize (organ). 1-12" disc (*L-DTL-93037) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor; Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor; Prelude and Triple Fugue in E-flat; Prelude and Fugue in A.*

Bach Organ Recital. Anton Nowakowski, playing the organ of the Klosterkirche an Sorö (Denmark). 1-10" disc in box (*T-LGM-65030) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Prelude and Fugue in E minor; Fantasia in G; Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor.*

Of the group listed above, the most novel and interesting disc is the Couperin *Messe Solennelle*. At the age of twenty-two, François Couperin, organist of Saint-Gervais, put on sale, with license from the King, "organ pieces consisting of two masses." These two masses comprise twenty-one pieces each, the more decorative and complex mass intended "for the ordinary use of parish churches for solemn feasts," the other, simpler and shorter, "suitable for monasteries and convents." The intention of the composer was to group together in the organ Mass a certain number of versets, in which the large organ alternates with the choir for the Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei, and two or three free pieces intended for the Offertory, Elevation and the Deo Gratias at the end of the service. There is an abundance of variety and color throughout all of this music, and Gaston Litaize has tried to observe all the registration indicated by Couperin in the score. The use of the organ at Saint-Merri (wherever that may be, France probably) enabled Litaize to recreate

the colors Couperin stipulated. The organ is a marvelous instrument and is well recorded. The various solo stops are beautiful and the ensemble is thrilling. This is a splendid disc which we recommend for the consideration of real organ fans and those interested in music of Couperin's time.

Playing an unspecified organ (why do record companies do such stupid things?), Gaston Litaize turns to four of the greatest works of Bach. His performances are credible indeed, and the organ is a fascinating affair with a monstrous pedal division that has been recorded with remarkable fidelity, considering the sound to be captured. This will give your woofers something to woof about.

After hearing brother Gaston do the mighty *Passacaglia* we played a vignette of the same work, this little cameo by one Anton Nowakowski, struggling vainly to get something out of a perky set of whistles in the land of Denmark. A sample of the inadequacy of both Nowakowski and the organ he is playing is the wretched performance of the wonderful "Cathedral" *Prelude and Fugue in E minor*. The high registers of this organ have the sound of cold steel, the lower ones have an anemic and quinty quality. This is not our cup of tea. S.

Fabulous Eddie. Eddie Osborn at the Wurlitzer Pipe Organ. 1-12" disc (*REPLICA 33x511) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *In My Merry Oldsmobile; On a Bicycle Built for Two; In the Good Old Summer-time; Baby Face; 12 others.*

Helen's Holiday. Helen Westbrook at the Wurlitzer organ, Oriental Theatre, Chicago. 1-10" disc (*REPLICA 33x512) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Toy Trumpet; Sleepy Lagoon; Hot Canary; Vienna Life; 6 others.*

Pearl at the Aragon Organ. Hal Pearl at the Aragon Pipe Organ. 1-10" disc (*REPLICA 33x502) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Dizzy Fingers; Malaguena; Song of India; Satan Takes a Holiday; 4 others.*

Swell to Great! Bill Knaus at the Wurlitzer at the Trianon Ballroom, Chicago. 1-10" disc (*REPLICA 33x508) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Five Foot Two; Dancing in the Dark; So in Love; 12th Street Rag; 4 others.*

Organ Echoes. Kay McAbee at the Wurlitzer Organ, Paramount Theatre, Aurora (Ill.). 1-10" disc (*REPLICA 33x506) \$4.

CONTENTS: *When Johnny Comes Marching Home; Glow Worm; Frenesi; Fiddle Faddle; 4 others.*

In the past few months we have reviewed several very fine classical organ discs which had exceptionally high fidelity reproduction. Evidently feeling that there is a limit to the sales potential of any classical organ disc, regardless of its fidelity, Replica has issued several organ discs in a popular vein, the re-

production of which is second to none we've ever heard. High fidelity fans who may wish to demonstrate their phonographs to their Aunt Tillie, who wouldn't know Bach from Couperin, may now select any of the above discs, each of which will positively startle the most jaded listener with its realism.

ASIDE TO DEALERS: If you are having a hi-fi show in your town, or are looking for some sure-fire demonstrators to sell high fidelity phonographs, lay in a stock of these numbers.

PIANO



Mozart: Sonata in D for Two Pianos, K. 448. And **Mozart: Theme and Variations for Piano, Four Hands, K. 501.** One side, and **Schubert: Fantasia in F for Piano, Four Hands, Op. 103.** And **Schubert: Andantino Varié for Piano, Four Hands, Op. 84, No. 1.** Robert and Gaby Casadesus (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5046) \$4.98.

No one that we ever heard about has ever taken note of the wonder that *mère* and *père* Casadesus play so well together. Why, we know some couples who can't even play bridge together! Brother and sister we could understand; even an un-related couple whose only connection was professional. But here are a man and a woman, married to each other, playing, in perfect rapport, these delightful Mozart and Schubert pieces for piano, four hands. In this day and age, we think that's newsworthy, and report it for what it's worth.

Liszt: Hungarian Fantasia. One-half side, and **Spanish Music.** José Iturbi (piano) conducting the Valencia Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1937) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Three-Cornered Hat* — Dances (Fallá); *Marche Burlesque* (Palau); *Hommage à Debussy* (Palau); *Homenage a la Tempranica* (Rodrigo); *Seguidillas* (Iturbi); *Interior from Valencianos* (López Chavarri).

A Brailowsky Recital. Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1918) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op. 11* (Schumann); *Andante and Rondo Capriccioso in E, Op. 14* (Mendelssohn); *Impromptu No. 3 in G, Op. 90* (Schubert); *Impromptu No. 4 in A-flat, Op. 90* (Schubert); *Invitation to the Dance* (Weber).

Clementi: (3) Sonatas. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1902) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Sonata in G minor, Op. 34, No. 2*; *Sonata in F minor, Op. 14, No. 3*; *Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op. 26, No. 2*.

RCA Victor has issued five discs by four of its "big guns" on its roster of pianists this month, and three of them are listed above. (The fourth and fifth, by Rubinstein, are reviewed separately in this issue).

Actually only a quarter of the first disc could

properly be called a "piano" record, since all but the Liszt item are orchestral and demonstrate Mr. Iturbi's conductorial ability with and sympathy for Spanish orchestral music. We should say that the disc is a successful effort.

Brailowsky is right at home in the music he says; his impeccable touch makes fresh and graceful music of these thrice-heard numbers.

Very few of the works of Muzio Clementi (1752-1832) are available on records today, and he is almost never heard in the concert hall; which is a great pity, as we think you'll agree when you hear Clementi's most eminent latter-day champion, Vladimir Horowitz, execute these lovely Sonatas on this "New Orthophonic" RCA Victor disc.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13** ("Pathétique"). Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1908) \$3.98.

Chopin: (14) Waltzes. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1892) \$3.98.

Rubinstein recorded both of these Beethoven Sonatas back in pre-LP days, but we cannot find any record of his having performed all of Chopin's Waltzes before. He seems as agile as ever, and the present brace of discs will surely please his many fans.

VIOLONCELLO



Bloch: Voice in the Wilderness. One side, and **Bloch: Schelomo.** Zara Nelsova (violoncello) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1232) \$3.98.

Bloch: Schelomo. One side, and **Bruch: Kol Nidrei, Op. 47.** And **Bruch: Canzone, Op. 55.** Antonio Janigro (violoncello) with the Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18007) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18007) \$4.98.

Admirers of the 'cello or of the music of Ernest Bloch will find the *Voice in the Wilderness* a rewarding work; others will find themselves in rather deep water. Composed in 1935-36 at Châtel Haute Savoie, a lovely spot in the Swiss mountains, *Voice* was first written for piano and 'cello, then for orchestra and 'cello, and a shortened third version for piano solo under the title of "Visions and Prophecies." There is no program of any kind behind the work; it is a series of meditative movements, thoughtful and philosophical. The six movements bear tempo indications but no names. Zara Nelsova, a sensitive artist, makes the 'cello ring with the grateful passages Bloch has carved for the instrument and Ansermet weaves an orchestral tapestry of delicate richness. For unfamiliar music, we thought the performance very con-

vincing and obviously deeply felt and sincere.

The Bloch *Schelomo*, a great 'cello favorite, is now represented with two more LP performances. Nelsova's approach is somewhat larger and bolder than Janigro's, and their respective conductors dutifully mirror these different approaches. Our own preference was for the Nelsova-Ansermet version, but we would not argue it is the better one, for those who prefer the more delicate and sensitive Janigro-Rodzinski reading will find exquisite playing on that disc. Reproduction, while of a different quality on both discs, is splendid on either one with a lovely 'cello tone in the forefront.

For a coupling, Janigro turns to more familiar 'cello repertoire, in the Max Bruch *Kol Nidrei*, in which he and Rodzinski again spin delicate threads of exquisite texture. The side is filled out with *Canzone*, a songful work indeed, of long melodic arches which the 'cello's rich, smooth voice finds agreeable.

S.

BAND



Anderson: Christmas Festival. One side, and **Anderson: Sleigh Ride.** And **Humperdinck: Hansel and Gretel**—Children's Prayer. Allentown Band conducted by Albertus L. Meyers. 1-7" disc (ΦWFB-WH1204E) \$1.49.

We had never heard of the Allentown (Pa.) Band, but evidently this lack of information is our ignorance, for we learn that it is the oldest band in the nation, that it supplied more members to the famed Sousa band than any other band in the country. Its conductor, Albertus L. Meyers, has been around a long time; he is presently Director of Instrumental Music at Allentown High School, has played with Liberatti's Band (1921), Pryor's Band (1923), Conway's Band (1924), and Sousa's Band (1925). The Allentown Band elected him conductor after he left Sousa; this band is not professional, but you'd never guess that to hear this recording.

Christmas Festival is an arrangement by Leroy Anderson of nine familiar carols; *Sleigh Ride* and the Children's Prayer from *Hansel und Gretel* are thrice familiar, and the Allentown Band plays them with fervor and spirit. A nice little 45 rpm disc, with fine reproduction.

VIOLIN



Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21. David Oistrakh (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35205TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35205) \$4.98.

The LP lists do not lack a couple of good recordings of Lalo's tuneful *Symphonie Espagnole* with the Heifetz, Menuhin, and Milstein versions; however, one is always ready to hear what Oistrakh has to say about the matter. Whether or not every-

one will agree that Oistrakh walks away with top honors may be questionable; but it is certain everyone will agree he does a superlative job with the score. There can be little argument that he also has the best reproduction of all available versions, for this recording, made in London, is a fine example of balance between solo instrument and orchestra as well as general excellence of clarity and timbre. We would name this disc as the preferred version of the work by a fair margin.

The present version occupies two sides, whereas some versions are contained on one side. One-sided versions offer four movements; complete performances of all five movements must run onto the second side. Angel offers no coupling, but the reproduction is good, with no pre-echo from close grooving. Most real connoisseurs of violin concerto music prefer the five movement version of the *Symphonie Espagnole*. The movement sometimes omitted is *Intermezzo*, the third movement, an *allegretto* of admittedly weaker profile and substance than the other four movements, but a section which somehow belongs in the scheme of things. The entire work is full of catchy, melodious themes presented in beguiling rhythms and set forth in colorful orchestration. The beauty of it is that it never sacrifices melodic appeal to virtuoso writing, for while it requires real virtuoso playing, one is not aware of the mechanics involved. We thoroughly enjoyed the music, Oistrakh's brilliant playing, and Martinon's fine orchestral support on this splendid disc.

S.



DICTION

I Can Hear It Now (Vol. IV). Excerpts from speeches by the Rt. Hon. Sir Winston Churchill, K. G., O. M., C. H., F. R. S. Edited by Edward R. Murrow and Fred W. Friendly, with commentary by Mr. Murrow. 1-12" disc in folder (*C-ML-5066) \$5.95.

Edward R. Murrow surely has a keen sense of news, and by meticulous editing can paint a most accurate portrait of a man from excerpts of his speeches. Aided and abetted by his colleague, Fred Friendly, Mr. Murrow has compressed the words of Sir Winston Churchill, spoken over a period from 1909 to 1951, into an hour of recording; and, with his terse, deft commentary, has given us a capsule biography of one of the great statesmen of our day.

Most of this record is devoted, naturally, to the period 1939 to 1945, covering the period of World War II. Wit, irony, courage, and character are reflected in these excerpts, which we found all too short; for Sir Winston is certainly a fine speaker, and it would have been a distinct pleasure to hear a good many more words than could be placed on this disc.

Mr. Murrow wisely refrains from expressing any opinion and lets Sir Winston's words speak for him; nevertheless one gets the distinct feeling that Mr. Murrow's opinion of Churchill is very high, and

one could well believe that, without taking one whit from the courage of Britain and of Englishmen, Mr. Murrow gives Sir Winston credit, by the sheer impact of his words and example, for practically single-handedly defeating Hitler's invasion of Great Britain. Future historians will place persons and events of our time in their proper perspective; but surely His Majesty's Prime Minister will be given a large share of the credit for England's and the Commonwealth's fine showing in "their finest hour." J.

Eliot: Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats. Robert Donat (reading) with musical setting by Alan Rawsthorne played by the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by the composer. 1-12" factory-sealed disc in box (*ANG-30002) \$3.98.

Alan Rawsthorne wrote this music to six poems about cats by T. S. Eliot at the suggestion of the promoters of the 1954 Edinburgh Festival; it was designed to be a concert for children. Angel's streamer blazons across the top of each album "... for Cat-Lovers and Music-Lovers ... the Perfect Gift for Old and Young." When this disc was released in England, the *London Daily Herald* remarked: "This piece should delight children and tickle all cat-loving adults. The music prances and prowls, conjuring up cats stately and prim, hard-boiled and shabby." *The Scotsman* had this to say: "Practical Cats' may well be the successor of 'Facade' and also of that other little masterpiece in this genre to which, in fact, it bears many resemblances, Prokofiev's 'Peter and the Wolf'."



MISCELLANEOUS

An Evening of Elizabethan Verse and Its Music. W. H. Auden (reading) with the New York Pro Musica Antiqua directed by Noah Greenberg. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5051) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Tan Ta Ra Cries Mars* (Weelkes); *Sweet, If You Like and Love Me Still* (Jones); *Flora Gave Me Fairest Flowers* (Wilbye); *Come My Celia* (Ferrabosco); *Sweet Kate of Late* (Jones); *Through Your Strangeness* (Jones); *I Saw My Lady Weeping* (Morely); *Sweet Honey Sucking Bees* (Wilbye); *Up Then Melpomene* (Kirbye); *In Darkness Let Me Dwell* (Dowland); *What Is Our Life?* (Gibbons); *So So Leave Off This Last Lamenting Kiss* (Ferrabosco); *Upon a Bank with Roses* (Ward); *When David Heard that Absalom Was Slain* (Tompkins).

A very clever idea—that of having someone read the words of an Elizabethan madrigal and follow this with the singing of it. The vocalizing of the New York Pro Musica Antiqua leaves absolutely nothing to be desired; this group is, as it were, to the manner born; one has no difficulty capturing the spirit of these delightfully earthy songs.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Fabulous Phonograph. By Roland Gelatt. 320 pp. Illustrated. J. B. Lippincott Company (Philadelphia and New York). Price \$4.95.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ø indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

The Long Playing Record Guide. By Warren De Motte. (Foreword by Leopold Stokowski). 448 pp. Paper Bound. Dell Publishing Co., Inc. (New York). Price 50¢ (Postpaid, 60¢).

Here is the greatest value we have ever seen in a book for buyers of LP classical records. Over 400 pages of recordings listed by composers with the best version indicated by an arrow and usually a few brief remarks about the composer, the artists, and the quality of the reproduction. We checked quite a few of Mr. De Motte's choices and, while some of them would not be ours, we found he was always on firm ground in making his selection. You also may not always agree with him, but he gives you a starting point in making a selection of a musical work that is represented by quite a number of recordings.

We just cannot imagine a record collector who would not want a copy of this book. If you cannot pick one up locally, just send 60¢ by coin, check or money order to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., U. S. A. (Coins may be safely sent if they are attached to your letter with Scotch tape).

* * *

The big news this month is Columbia's lowering of the prices of most of its 12-inch classical LP records from \$4.98 to \$3.98. This comes as no great surprise, in view of the fact that RCA Victor's price has been \$3.98 throughout 1955, and apparently its increased sales have been sufficient to enable RCA Victor to maintain this price. Certain specialty items, such as Original Cast Broadway Shows, will remain at \$4.98 or \$5.98; but collectors may surely thank Columbia for relieving most of the strain on their purses.

In short, Columbia ML-4000 series will be \$3.98; OL-4000 series will be \$4.98; CL-500

series (pops, jazz, and certain classics), \$3.98; KL-4000 Series will be \$5.98. Certain unusual items (such as *Confederacy*, Literary Series, etc.) will become "DSL" numbers, and will bear special prices. This will create a uniform (with the exceptions noted) pricing system which may be quickly learned by the collector, so that he may compute his budget quite accurately.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see TNR Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

NOTE: The **Current Market Price** of Westminster 5000-series is \$2.99.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of

the last three years beginning January, 1953 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (post-paid within U.S.A.)

NEW LP RELEASES

Roig: Cecilia Valdes. (Sung in Spanish). Soloists and orchestra—Roig. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65001) \$3.98. (TNR Apr. '49).

Britten: (4) Songs. One side, and **Hindemith: (9) Songs (1942).** Barbara Troxell (soprano) accompanied by Tibor Kozma (piano). 1-12" disc (*McINTOSH MC-1003) \$4.45. (TNR Aug. '53).

ORCHESTRA



Khatchaturian: Gayne Ballet Suite. One side, and **Khatchaturian: Masquerade Suite.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Aram Khatchaturian. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35277TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35277) \$4.98.

Franck: Le Chasseur Maudit. One side, and **Franck: Rédemption.** And **Franck: Psyché.** L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35232TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35232) \$4.98.

Lalo: Namouna (Ballet Suites Nos. 1 & 2). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1268) \$3.98.

Two of the most delightful ballet suites written in our day are presented with the composer conducting one of the greatest orchestras in the business and recorded with the zenith of high fidelity to make one of the best discs we have heard in a long time. Of course, the fact that this music has so much genuine appeal makes it a cause for carping and slighting by some critics, but the less snobbish of them like it for its gay, melodious charm and good solid workmanship, and we think the public is entitled to something pleasant to hear once in a while. To tell the truth, we think it's terrific and recommend it as the best way to start a new year and keep in good spirits. Put down Angel 35277 as a real joy.

André Cluytens is on familiar and congenial ground with the three descriptive works which he has chosen for this disc of Franck music. Cluytens is an extremely sensitive and sensible artist, whose fine-grained conducting is shown off to the best possible advantage in this music. Considering the ideal coupling of these works on one disc and the fine reproduction to back up the elegant interpretations, this is a disc to be recommended. Our copy of the disc was a bit off center on the *Chasseur* side, so check yours to be sure it is correct; otherwise the horn calls are not true.

Lalo's *Namouna* is a ballet which suffers, so the program notes tell us, from a rather extravagant scenario. We would imagine that it is good music

for ballet purposes, but it had a hard time holding our attention. It is good, nicely-wrought music, but it just does not have the fundamental something that distinguishes it from reams of other well-constructed music that cannot hold its place in the repertoire over the years. Jean Martinon lavishes care and affection in this well-played and well-recorded edition. S.

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 1, Op. 138. And **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 2, Op. 72.** One side, and **Beethoven: Fidelio—Overture, Op. 72.** And **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35258TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35258) \$4.98.

The record jacket lists these as "The Four Overtures to Fidelio" and the program notes discuss these four great works and their relation to the opera and the probable order of their composition. In a way, it is a shame to devote excess space to a lengthy discussion of the disc, for it can be said in one word: magnificent. No one else has performed these overtures better on records at any time; these performances are clearly the best we ever heard and ever hope to hear. The orchestra, needless to say, is superb, and Klemperer's readings are the last word. The *Leonore* No. 3 emerges as the great work that it really is, never once lagging or becoming diffuse, which often happens in less skilled hands. It is a dramatic masterpiece in fact and in the recording.

The order in which the four are played is: *Leonore* No. 1, *Leonore* No. 2, *Fidelio*, and *Leonore* No. 3, and that is the best order in which to hear the four at one time. The reproduction is of today's very best, which makes this disc one recommended without reservation.

It is interesting to note that Rossini was content to let one of his overtures serve for four operas; Beethoven wrote four overtures for his one opera. The first performance of all four in the same concert was given by Mendelssohn, at a Leipzig Gewandhaus concert in 1840. While an unusual practice at regular symphony concerts, hearing all four at one sitting is a pleasure, and we can be grateful to records for this experience—doubly grateful to this particular record for the quality of the performances. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 36 in C, K. 425 ("Linz"). One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat.** Berlin Chamber Orchestra conducted by Hans von Benda. 1-12" disc (*T-LGX-66020) \$4.98.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter").** L'Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc in box (*L-DTL-93020) \$4.98.

This pair of discs could be called a breath of Vienna, even though neither has much Viennese about it from a glance at the label. The perform-

ances, however, are of the broad, spacious, warm and sweet variety that we usually term Viennese. The surprise for us was in the Schubert *Fifth*. A pre-war Telefunken 78 rpm recording of this work by Hans von Benda conducting the Berlin Philharmonic is still in our collection, and a comparison of the two shows von Benda has mellowed plenty since his Hitlerian fling in younger days. His Schubert *Fifth* may have been tempered by the fact that the last movement, for example, had to fit on one twelve inch side about four minutes in duration back in the dark 78 days. But the new version has more than tempo adjustments; it has also a better curving of phrases and a less taut approach. We would not recommend it over the Bohm (*L-LL-1105) or possibly even over others, including Beecham; but on its own merits the von Benda reading is good, and it is nicely played. The Mozart "Linz" is up against some stiff competition, particularly from Beecham and Walter. Von Benda's effort is a worthy one, and on the basis of coupling, this disc can be recommended. Coupling aside, you may well prefer other versions of either of these works. Reproduction is good on both sides.

Scherchen has come up with a pair of fine readings in these two popular Mozart symphonies. The subject of coupling is again present, and this time we have two of Mozart's greatest symphonies together on one disc. These readings are very broadly paced, not pushed or hurried. Unlike some of Scherchen's Haydn recordings, the Mozart is not blown up bigger than life. We liked these readings, and the bright reproduction, and were surprised how good the orchestra is, although it has not the style and touch of some of the more renowned ensembles. These worthy performances can be recommended, particularly considering the choice coupling.

S.

Slavenski: Sinfonia Orienta. Belgrade Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Zhika Zdravokovich, with Melanie Bugarinovich (contralto), Dushan Tzveych (tenor), Dushan Popovich (baritone) and Zharko Tzveych (bass). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1216) \$3.98.

Baranovich: The Gingerbread Heart. Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kreshimir Baranovich. One side, and Lhotka: **The Devil in the Village.** Orchestra of the National Opera House, Zagreb, conducted by Fran Lhotka. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1235) \$3.98.

For a change of pace, you are invited to step into the seldom-trod paths of music in Yugoslavia and listen to some music that is original beyond possibility of argument. Josip Slavenski, nearing his sixtieth year, is a self-taught musician who ventures far from familiar musical terrain as a composer, although he is a professor at the Belgrade Conservatoire. He has composed a large number of works in various forms; the present work, *Sinfonia Orienta*, dates from 1933-34. The work is a setting of ancient

texts in their original language, and it attempts to survey the history of Man's efforts to express religious belief through music. The work has the subtitle "Symphonic Cantata in seven parts for soloists, chorus and orchestra" and is dedicated "to the *Missa Solemnis* of Beethoven." The seven movements are titled: Pagans, Hebrews, Buddhists, Christians, Moslems, Free Thought, and Hymn of Toil. It is music of power and invention; and we admit it has a knack of commanding interest and holding attention for its novelty as well as its rather solid musical effects. While not too many may wish to own this disc, we imagine quite a few would enjoy hearing it once or twice, for it is a fascinating musical experience. The level of competence in performance is uniformly high, the chorus being particularly good. Reproduction is fine.

Cast in a more familiar mold is *The Gingerbread Heart*, a ballet suite popular in the land of its creation. Baranovich is conductor of the Belgrade National Opera and a man of wide musical experience. There is a slight kinship to Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*, but the Baranovich work has more gingerbread and less heart than *Petrouchka* (without wishing to be facetious about the matter).

Fran Lhotka is of Czech origin but has lived in Yugoslavia since 1909 and has absorbed its musical atmosphere and centers his activities in Zagreb. At home mostly in theatre music, his ballet suite seems less contrived than Baranovich's and his orchestra is recorded with a little more clarity. We imagine this would make a pretty good ballet, and as music it is indeed respectable.

S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 ("Pathétique"). Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Arthur Rodzinski. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18048) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc in folder (*WEST-WN-18048) \$4.98.

Having heaped encomiums on the recent Monteux reading of this venerable work (*V-LM-1901), we got jittery for the first few minutes of this recording by Rodzinski. The performance begins with breadth and dramatic spacing that is impressive. However, as the work unfolds, the impression is that there is too much effort for the sake of effect, and not a cumulative impression of inspiration and absorption of the music. Interest flags continually, where in the Monteux version it increases and carries the listener along until the final note has died away. It is rather like costume jewelry: gaudy, clever, eye-catching and rather nice, but no match for a really fine work of art in platinum. Rodzinski knows every measure of this work thoroughly, but he has not the over-all feeling for it and the ability to make it hang together and gather momentum that Monteux exhibits. The reproduction of the Victor set is richer and plushier than the Westminster, although the latter may have a slight edge in clarity that will appeal to some hi-fi enthusiasts. Our preference is

clearly for Monteux in matters of interpretation, orchestral performance, and reproduction, to say nothing of genuine inspiration.

Other worthy readings of this repertoire staple include those by Kubelik, Ormandy, Steinberg, as well as Toscanini, Bernstein, and a few more. Your best bet is either Monteux or Ormandy. S.

CONCERTO



Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30.

Emil Gilels (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by André Clutens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35230TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35230) \$4.98.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23.

Emil Gilels (piano) with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1969) \$3.98.

One of the toughest nuts to crack in the piano concerto repertoire seems to be the Rachmaninoff Third; and now that Rachmaninoff's own performance is available on LP (*V-LM-6123, with the other concerti and the Rhapsody) it is going to be a tougher situation than ever for all other pianists. Gilels, who has just finished a sensational concert tour of this country to the most enthusiastic of critical and audience acclaim, proves himself the equal of any of the others who have recorded it except the composer himself. In fact, Gilels is probably the superior of all the others, but he has not quite the subtlety of Rachmaninoff. If the fine shades of performance mean less to you than higher fidelity reproduction, then Gilels is the recording to get of this charming work. The opening passages alone are among Rachmaninoff's finest inspirations, and the entire Concerto is one of the gems of the literature. Cluytens' accompaniment is dutiful, if lacking in any definite contribution; it could have more profile and less apology for being there. The reproduction is rich and mellow.

Using the famous Tchaikovsky Concerto for his debut vehicle in America, Gilels captured his audiences completely. His recording of the work is one of the truly great ones ever committed to discs. Played in the grand manner and with astonishing bravura, this is one to quicken the pulse of a large segment of the record-buying public. Those who did not hear him in person will be able to gather some idea of the magnitude of his pianism. Reiner is an enthusiastic collaborator and supplies an inspired accompaniment with the orchestra on tip-toe all the way through. The reproduction is clear and bright—excellent in every respect, including fine balance. For those who have followed these columns a while, we will say that this disc does not in the least efface our preference and affection for the Cherkassky reading (*D-DL-9605) as the most interesting and imaginative interpretation. S.

Liszt: Concerto No. 1 in E-flat. One side, and Liszt: Concerto No. 2 in A. Wilhelm Kempff (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*LL-1072) \$3.98.

Liszt: Concerto No. 1 in E-flat. One side, and Liszt: Hungarian Fantasia. Geza Anda (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35268TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35268) \$4.98.

The Concerto No. 1 turned out to be more of a contest than we expected. After playing each one through and going over numerous sections for comparison, the result turned out differently than we had expected. Your reviewer must admit he expected the Kempff disc to be an easy winner, but after hearing them carefully we admit a preference for the Anda performance. Kempff has authority, but Anda has a much larger conception of the work which he manages to put over with a flourish. At the beginning one wonders whether his idea can be sustained and made convincing, an accomplishment which he carries out magnificently. Anda achieves quite a forceful reading and he is aided with an accompaniment from the excellent orchestra and a conductor who companions his wishes to the letter. Furthermore, the reproduction is superb, with somewhat better clarity and notably better tone than the Kempff. Rounder string tone is to be found on the Angel disc, a rather nasal and thin string tone on the London.

As for the couplings, there can be no doubt that the Concerto No. 2 is a better dish than the Hungarian Fantasia. Anda does noble work with the Fantasia, but the work is a gypsy war-horse of a type not to be classified with the Concerto No. 2. For what it is, Anda and Ackermann give the Fantasia a profile of exceptional dignity and stature, and considering what these artists, plus the Philharmonia Orchestra, accomplish, this is the best version to be found on LP—and the best reproduction also.

We thought Kempff's performance of the Concerto No. 2 better than the No. 1. The No. 2 is not quite as obvious a piece of music as the No. 1 and is actually a more rewarding work. Kempff can hold his own with the other LP versions in the No. 2, and the orchestral support is very good. One thing is certain; of the several LP's featuring a coupling of the Nos. 1 and 2, Kempff is to be preferred. S.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. Nathan Milstein (violin) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8313) \$3.98.

There are over a dozen recordings of Beethoven's Violin Concerto in the current issue of Schwann's LP catalog, and it is naturally to be wished that Capitol might make the great talent of Nathan Mil-

stein available for some violin pieces which are in greater need of a good recording. On the other hand, we can certainly understand Capitol's desire to compete for the consumer dollar; and surely this Concerto is one of the popular ones, so if Capitol is to compete, it must have a good recording of it, with good fidelity.

And here it is. Milstein and Steinberg make this work seem easy, sound romantic and lush, and their version will certainly have its adherents. The reproduction of the present LP rates with the very best.

Vivaldi: II Cimento dell' Armonia e dell' Invenzione, Op. 8. (12 Violin Concertos). Reinhold Barchet (violin) with the Pro Musica String Orchestra, Stuttgart, conducted by Rolf Reinhardt, with Helma Eisner (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album (*VX-DL-173) \$19.50.

Corelli: (12) Trio Sonatas, Op. 3. Three sides, and Corelli: (12) Trio Sonatas, Op. 4. Muscorum Arcadia: Alberto Poltronieri and Tino Bacchetta (violins); Mario Gusella (violinello); Egida Giordani Sartori (harpsichord); and Gianfranco Spinelli (organ). 3-12" discs in album (*VX-DL-163) \$19.50.

More wonderfully Italianate baroque music to revel in this month from Vox. The *II Cimento dell' Armonia e dell' Invenzione* is rendered by the same performers who gave us *L'Estro Armonico* (TNR June '52) and *La Stravaganza* (TNR July '54); both performance and reproduction are just as good in the present set as in the two previous, which is high recommendation, indeed. Packaging is plush, with an album with padded covers inserted into a sturdy cardboard box; some may say that this defeats the purpose of LP records, but it does protect the records, and these are very special sets, deserving of some special dress. Op. 8 contains the famous *Four Seasons*, making this volume most desirable.

The 24 Corelli Sonatas are more than adequately presented, and the packaging is similar to the Vivaldi. If the works are less impressive on first hearing, it is because of the smaller instrumentation; if Corelli wasn't quite the genius Vivaldi was, he runs a close second in our book, and the present issue has our fondest blessing.

Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25. One side, and Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 40. Riene Gianoli (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Milan Horvat. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18043) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc in folder (*WEST-WN-18043) \$4.98.

This is but the second LP to be issued which couples both the *First* and the *Second* Mendelssohn piano concertos, an obvious and very desirable coupling. It is a fine performance and a splendid recording and can be recommended highly, not only on these grounds but also as a disc laden with much

listening pleasure. As an ardent admirer of the music of Mendelssohn, this writer always welcomes a good disc containing his enchanting music. These Concertos demonstrate again the rare melodic gift of the composer, and they further exhibit his skill in composition, for the form and the handling of the solo instrument are not beneath the work of more celebrated composers. The No. 1 in G minor is a more familiar work than the No. 2 in D minor, but the latter has just as much to offer and will strike some as akin to Beethoven in more than one spot.

Reine Gianoli is a name we do not recall having heard previously. One of her teachers, Alfred Cortot, presented her to the Parisian public, and she has concertized throughout Europe, appearing with Enesco, Casals, and Edwin Fisher. Since 1947 she has been on the faculty of l'Ecole Normale de Musique. Miss Gianoli is an accurate player and a sensitive artist, fully equal to the demands of the two Mendelssohn concertos which she essays in masterly form on this disc. Her orchestral collaborator takes more than a casual interest in the proceedings, and the whole effort can be counted as successful. Reproduction which is not strident, but enjoys clarity and balance, is another feature of this disc. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: (4) Divertimenti. Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18011) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18011) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Divertimenti* No. 3 in E-flat, K. 166; No. 4 in B-flat, K. 186; No. 9 in B-flat, K. 240; No. 16 in E-flat, K. 289.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 15 in B-flat, K. 287. Members of the Vienna Octet. 1-12" disc (*LL-1239) \$3.98.

Westminster's recording of four little Mozart *Divertimenti* for winds is certainly a charming disc, abounding in graceful melodies with sparkling reproduction. . . . The only other recording of Mozart's *Divertimento* No. 15, K. 287, is on Vanguard (TNR, Oct. '54); it found favor in these columns, and it is not improved on by the new London issue listed above. Nevertheless, prospective purchasers will now have two excellent versions from which to choose.

Bruckner: Quintet in F. Koeckert Quartet with Georg Schmid (viola). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9796) \$3.98.

This is an LP first recording and, so far as we can discover, the only recorded example of Bruckner's writing for chamber group. As such, it should be welcomed by collectors of chamber music—especially those looking for something "new."

Dating from 1879, this romantic work was not premiered *in toto* until 1885, largely because conductor Josef Hellmesberger, who commissioned the

work, felt that the Scherzo (second movement) was unplayable; he further felt that the "modernisms" in the work would have an unfavorable reaction from the public. As with many works written 50 to 75 years ago, it is difficult for us to understand the then criticisms; a valid modern criticism might be that Bruckner was overly long-winded, as many feel he was with his symphonic works. Nevertheless, we did not feel that way; repeated playings indicated to us that the composer meticulously picked up the "loose ends" when it seemed best for him to do so, and he did so melodiously, if not concisely.

The Koeckert Quartet, we learn from the jacket notes, is regarded as Germany's leading chamber music ensemble today; when not touring, they are members of the Bavarian Radio Orchestra. With Georg Schmid, the group plays its *Quintet* with feeling and spirit. Decca's reproduction rates with today's best.

CHORAL



Beethoven: Missa Solemnis (complete). (Sung in Latin). Maria Stader (soprano); Marianna Radev (contralto); Anton Dermota (tenor); Josef Greindl (bass); Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-135) \$9.96.

"Of Beethoven's religious beliefs we know very little," wrote the late J. W. N. Sullivan in his excellent monograph on Beethoven, "except that they were not orthodox. That Beethoven, towards the end, came to possess a mystical apprehension of life is indisputable, but it is probable that this mystical outlook would have been, in his case, more recalcitrant even than usual to exposition in words. But, so far as these things can be expressed in words, we may conclude, from his own remarks, that he believed in an ultimate, benign and intelligent Power, and he also believed that existence was planned and purposeful." Beethoven's use of the form of the mass, however, has caused some observers to conclude that it is a usual interpretation that he gives. This writer does not hold with such ideas and is inclined to feel that, quite often, the words of the mass are used as a libretto on which musical creed or confession is hung.

Karl Böhm has come closer to explaining the mysteries of this portentous work than any other conductor on records. There is an air of expectancy right at the beginning that turns into a forthright exposition of the work. Böhm does not indulge in any nonsense or exaggeration and avoids reading into the score either personal ideas or preconceived theological dogma; he tries, and is largely successful, to hold a musical mirror up to Beethoven's expression and to reflect, as clearly as possible, the startlingly explicit doctrine expounded by the composer.

The soloists are among the finest singers in Europe,

and they perform with understanding, beauty of tone and feeling. The choir of Saint Hedwig's Cathedral and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra leave nothing to be desired—they are uniformly excellent and responsive to Karl Böhm's inspired direction.

Decca has given the set the finest sound this writer has yet heard from this manufacturer, so the entire enterprise is one worthy of the highest praise. For those who have been waiting for a really satisfactory *Missa Solemnis*—here it is. W.

Concert of Sacred Music. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir directed by J. Spencer Cornwall. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5048) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Light in Darkness; Lead Kindly Light; Ave Verum; Sapphic Ode; As Torrents in Summer; Nymphs and Shepherds; Listen to the Lambs; Weep You No More, Sad Fountains; Fierce Raged the Tempest; Thy Word Is a Lantern; How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place.*

Spirituals. The Tuskegee Institute Choir directed by William L. Dawson. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18080) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc in folder (*WEST-WN-18080) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Every Time I Feel the Spirit; Were You There; I Want to be Ready; Listen to the Lambs; Ain't a That Good News?; Mary Had a Baby; King Jesus Is a-Listenin'; Rockin' Jerusalem; Ezekiel Saw de Wheel; Deep River; I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray; There is a Balm in Gilead; Hail Mary!; I've Been 'Buked; Behold the Star.*

Recorded concerts by two American choral groups offer an interesting contrast this month. Of the two organizations, probably the Mormon Tabernacle Choir is the better known due to its long series of radio concerts over CBS. There can be no doubt regarding the musicianship, beautiful tone and general polish of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir—facts that only serve to point up that here, with this program material, it is wasting its time—sending a battleship out to sink a rowboat is, one believes, the proper description. Most of the music is the sort sung by the average church choir. Of all the music on the disc, only Brahms' *Sapphic Ode* and Purcell's *Nymphs and Shepherds* (this is sacred music?) have any degree of musical stature. A disappointing disc only because of the poor musical material—it is well engineered, and the singing is the best possible.

The Tuskegee Institute Choir, on the other hand, offers sincere, moving versions of some of the better known and well-loved spirituals. Now this writer, as perhaps has been mentioned before, is no particular partisan of the Afro-American Spiritual, but here (as was the case with a pair of discs by Roland Hayes) the obvious sincerity of the approach coupled with the choir's meltingly lovely tone, have overcome many of this reviewer's objections and, in fact, he enjoyed the disc thoroughly. The inclusion

of such really beautiful songs as *Balm in Gilead*, *Every Time I feel the Spirit*, *Were You There* and *I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray* insures the success of the album. The other songs are also attractively presented by Mr. Dawson and his choir. This is as fine a recording of the Afro-American Spiritual as has yet been issued, and all lovers of the form should (and probably will) hasten to add it to their collections. Very fine sound. W.

Pergolesi: Stabat Mater. (Sung in Latin). Teresa Stich-Randall (soprano), Elizabeth Hoengen (alto), Vienna Akademiekammerchor and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Mario Rossi, with Anton Heiller (organ). 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-549) \$4.98.

Tallis: The Lamentations of Jeremiah. One side, and **Tallis: (5) Hymns.** (Sung in Latin). The Deller Consort directed by Alfred Deller. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-551) \$4.98.

CONTENTS OF HYMNS: *Jesu Salvator saeculi; Deus tuorum militum; O nata lux de lumine; Jam Christus astra ascenderat; Salvator mundi Domine.*

It seems strange, in view of the work's considerable popularity, that Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* has just received its second LP recording and the first that does it anything like justice. Space will not permit any discussion of the music's or composer's background, but both are fascinating. This information is available in the jacket notes, clearly presented by that prince of annotators, Abraham Vinius. Mario Rossi, as readers of these columns know, is one of this reviewer's favorite *maestri* and, sure enough, he turns in another polished, elegant and tasteful performance. It all seems so easy and natural when Mario Rossi is directing; certainly, here is a disc for all lovers of fine singing, for Mmes. Stich-Randall and Hoengen are in top form, the chorus and orchestra respond to Rossi's every wish, and the resultant performance is one that can be treasured for some time to come.

Very different but equally beautiful is the first extended recording of music by Thomas Tallis (1505-1585), music master to Elizabeth I and known to modern music lovers via a lovely *Fantasia* on one of his hymn tunes by Ralph Vaughan Williams. The *Lamentations of Jeremiah* is strangely moving music sung in authentic style by Alfred Deller and his associates. The *Hymns*, on the second side, are also very beautiful and have a haunting sadness so typical of much Elizabethan music. The disc is highly recommended for the *cognoscenti*, and it is suggested that the enterprising music lover who is tired of the standard repertory would do well to investigate it. W.

Palestrina: Missa Veni Sponsa Christi. One side, and **Lassus Missa** ("Puisque j'ai Perdu"). Vienna Kammerchor conducted by Hans Gillesberger. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN UNLP-1013) \$3.98.

Here are two first recordings that will delight all

lovers of choral singing and devotees of liturgical music. These twin giants of the 16th century, were almost exact contemporaries, Palestrina's dates being 1525-1594 while Orlando de Lassus' were 1530-1594. The former, an Italian, is variously known as "the Prince of Musicians" and "the savior of polyphony" and his ecclesiastical music is considered to combine all the virtues of devoutness and liturgical correctness. Lassus, on the other hand, a Fleming or Walloon (what we now call Belgian) was more "modern" and wrote a considerable amount of secular music. In addition, his music was more dramatic than that of his more churchly and sheltered contemporary.

The Masses recorded here are both "parody" Masses; that is, the melodies are based on a tune from some other work, usually polyphonic in nature, rather than on just a simple melody—in Palestrina's case the tune came from a motet of his own of the same name (i.e., *Veni Sponsa Christi*). Like all of Palestrina's music, it is deeply religious, moving and of the finest workmanship.

Lassus' Mass, also a "parody" Mass, is based on a secular *chanson* (a procedure frowned on by the Pope, but widely practiced none the less) of his own, *Puisque j'ai perdu*. This is more original music, the modulations are sharper, the rhythms are more irregular; it is, in short, more exciting.

Both works are sung by the Vienna Kammerchor directed by Dr. Hans Gillesberger, and its work is, in every respect, flawless. Its intonation, attack and tone are beautiful to hear, while the degree of expression with which it sings the texts is in perfect keeping with the mood and period of the Masses—in other words, it has style with a capital "S."

The recording is beautifully clear, and the discs are notable for very quiet surfaces. There are excellent notes by Klaus George Roy. W.

OPERA

Mozart: Die Zauberflöte (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 3-12" discs in album with vocal score (*L-XLLA-33) \$14.94.

PaminaHilde Gueden (s)
Queen of the NightWilma Lipp (s)
PapagenaEmmy Loose (s)
TaminoLeopold Simoneau (t)
SarastroKurt Böhme (bs)
PapagenoWalter Berry (bt)
SpeakerPaul Schoeffler (bs-bt)

The present recording of *Die Zauberflöte* is the third to appear on LP and, like one of its predecessors (*C-SL-115 TNR Dec. '51) it suffers, artistically, from comparison with the virtually perfect pre-war Beecham-directed performance on RCA Victor (*V-LCT-6101). This had to be stated at the outset



for, while there are many fine moments in this new set, it still does not have anything like the elegance and style of the older set. This is not just a crotchety reviewer's indigestion, either; but it is, admittedly, an intangible and for those who do not bother their beards about such affairs, the present set will fill the bill admirably.

As an example, take the opening scenes of the opera. After a first-rate performance of the *Overture*, the introduction suffers very seriously from a lack of urgency (after all, Tamino is being chased by an out-sized snake) and the next aria, *Dies Bildnis*, while very properly sung, is not in the least rapturous—and so on. The cast is, vocally speaking, a very strong one, but the only member of it who seems to have any grasp of the Mozart style and some inclination to project it is Walter Berry—the rest remain ladies and gentlemen; which is all very fine, perhaps, but it is certainly not Mozart.

Most of the blame for this state of affairs can be laid at conductor Böhm's door, for he is the director and, presumably, laid down the rules and passed on the performance. This writer, for example, knows that Leopold Simoneau can sing Mozart very well, for he was a fine Don Ottavio in Epic's *Don Giovanni*; but here he is made to sing note perfectly, and no more. As for Hilde Gueden's Mozartean capacities, one is unable to determine them from this recording for the same reasons. Wilma Lipp's *Astrafiamante* has been recorded before (in the Columbia set) and both she and Herr Böhm manage to keep the emotional hatches well battened down.

The wonderful Vienna Philharmonic is in fine form and some of the orchestral passages, in addition to being well played, sound very good. In fact, from a purely technical angle, this is as fine a *Zauberflöte* as one could wish for; but, from a musical or Mozartean point of view it left, for this listener, something to be desired.

W.

Puccini: *Madama Butterfly* (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 3-12" discs (*ANG-35225/7TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3523C/L) \$15.98.

Cio-Cio-San Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Suzuki Lucia Danieli (ms)
Kate Pinkerton Luisa Villa (ms)
Pinkerton Nicolai Gedda (t)
Sharpless Mario Borriello (bt)
Goro Renato Ercolani (t)
Prince Yamadori Mario Carlin (t)
The Bonze Plinio Clabassi (bs)
The Commissioner Enrico Campi (bs)

This issue of *Madama Butterfly* by Angel marks, believe it or not, the eighth LP version of Puccini's melodious and popular opera. As might be expected, the eighth version of anything has competition and, in this case, there is one recorded performance that

outdistances all the rest (*V-LM-6121, TNR Nov. '55) and at least one other fine recording (*L-XLLA-8, TNR Apr. '52) to offer the keenest of competition.

Now, in an opera like *Madama Butterfly*, the tenor and soprano carry over seventy per cent of the burden of the score, so both have to be first-class artists in order to make the work interesting—a circumstance only achieved in the Victor set. Here interest centers primarily around Maria Callas' singing and acting of the role of Cio-Cio-San. Her performance comes up to expectations. It is an individual one, but always in character, always convincing. Technically, the music offers no problems for her and, except on the few occasions when she forces her voice, she sings very beautifully. Nicolai Gedda is a light-voiced, rather ineffectual Lt. Pinkerton. Giuseppe di Stefano's characterization was referred to, in some quarters, as "hard-boiled," and it is reasonable to assume that such an unpleasant character would be hard-boiled. But Nicolai Gedda is a rather proper, mild-mannered tenor who doesn't come very close to being real. Mario Borriello is an excellent baritone and turns in a performance that has style and polish. Lucia Danieli heads the supporting cast and is a genuine and sympathetic Suzuki, while Renato Ercolani and Plinio Clabassi are outstanding as Goro and the Bonze respectively.

Herbert von Karajan's direction is uniformly good, as is the work of the chorus and orchestra. Superior sound and packaging are also conspicuous by their presence. Despite all its excellences, however, this Angel set remains second choice to the superb de los Angeles-di Stefano-Gobbi performance on RCA Victor.

W.

Verdi Baritone Arias. Leonard Warren (baritone) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1932) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Otello*—Inaffia l'ugola!, Era la notte, Credo in un Dio crudele; *La Forza del Destino*—Urna fatale del mio destino; *Rigoletto*—Cortigiani, vil razza dannata, Pari siamo!; *Il Trovatore*—Il balen del suo sorriso, Per me ora fatale; *La Traviata*—Di Provenza il mar; *Masked Ball*—Alla vita che t'arride, Eri tu; *Falstaff*—Eo sogno? o realtà?

Famous Operatic Monologues. George London (bass-baritone) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jean Morel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4999) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Die Meistersinger*—Fliedermonolog, Wahnmonolog; Boris Godounov—Monolog of Boris, Uf Zyazhelo! Dai Dukh Perevedu; *Falstaff*—Ford's monolog; *Rigoletto*—Pari siamo; *Otello*—Credo in un Dio crudele; *Thais*—Voilà donc la terrible cité; *Emperor Jones*—Standin' in the need of prayer.

When former Metropolitan diva Frances Alda wrote her memoirs some few years ago she lit on a very happy title: *Men, Women and Tenors*. The thought occurred to your reviewer, on playing these two records, that *Men, Women and Baritones* (con-

sidering the implications of the original title) would also have been pretty accurate.

Left to himself, any operatic singer is liable to do all sorts of things to the music unless he happens to be both a musician and an actor. Now, by and large, both Leonard Warren and George London are left pretty much to themselves; neither seems to have a conductor with a firm or very interested hand at the orchestral and musical helm (except Leonard Warren in the *Rigoletto* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* excerpts). Thus the results are those designed to please "fans" of the individual singer but are apt to leave the man who looks for "music drama" (in the broad, not the Wagnerian sense) quite cold.

Leonard Warren's idea of Iago is not in the least Shakespearian and, consequently, not Verdian either. His *Rigoletto*, from the complete set, is much better. The role of the Conte di Luna (also from the complete *Trovatore*) seems to bring out the "ham" in him and, when that happens, this writer evaporates. Vocally, of course, Mr. Warren is uniformly good—he knows how to sing, and he has a very fine voice.

George London is even less fortunate in conductors, for Jean Morel is the most dutiful of accompanists and allows the singer full say. In this case the results are not too good. To sing Wagner, Verdi, Moussorgsky, Massenet and Gruenberg requires genuine acting ability, genuine musicianship, some real help from the orchestra and conductor; and even granting London has the first two requirements, they cannot be realized without proper support. Thus his disc is one for those who admire the singer, come what may. W.

Bizet: Les Pêcheurs de Perles (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Théâtre National de l'Opéra-Comique de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35174/5TP) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3524B/L) \$10.98.

LeilaMartha Angelici (s)
NadirHenri Legay (t)
ZurgaMichel Dens (bt)
NourabadLouis Noguera (bs)

The astonishing activity on the part of the various recording companies is highlighted by Angel's release of Bizet's youthful *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*—the third recorded performance of an opera that is not even in the average opera company's repertoire (it hasn't been given at the Metropolitan since the 1916-17 season). Not that *The Pearl Fishers* is not worthy of all the attention; on the contrary, it contains some of Bizet's most ingratiating music and, when well performed, can be very effective.

This set falls somewhere between the excellences of the early Renaissance set (with Dobbs and Borthayre) (TNR May '52) and the rather confused version on Epic. Here Angel has gathered together a cast that is always good if seldom inspired. Martha Angelici has a pleasant lyric soprano and sings well

at all times. Henri Legay is a typical French tenor; a light voice, acceptable and very polished. Michel Dens is a robust Zurga and Louis Noguera a threatening and portentous Nourabad.

The lack of inspiration, mentioned earlier, is due primarily to Cluytens's lackadaisical and pedestrian direction. M. Cluytens, in fact, is totally unable to elicit any degree of enthusiasm from the more than adequate vocal and instrumental forces at his disposal. The earlier Renaissance recording, on the other hand, has the advantage of René Leibowitz's sure direction and, as a result, is still the best performance *per se*, despite its woefully inadequate tenoring.

Angel has supplied fine recorded sound, and an excellent libretto is furnished with the factory-sealed package. W.

Famous Records of the Past (Vol. 4). Voices of "The Golden Age." 1-10" disc (*FRP-4) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Falstaff*—Quand'ero paggio (Maurel); *L'Amico Fritz*—O Amore (De Lucia); *Sappho*—Pendant un an je fus ta femme (Calvé); *La Bohème*—Mi chiamano Mimi (Ferrari); *Roi de Lahore*—Promesse de mon avenir (La Salle); *Pelléas et Mélisande*—Mes longs cheveux (Garden); *Figlia di Jorio*—Rinverdisca per noi (Zenatello); *Zaza*—Buona Zaza (Sammacco); *Gianni Schicchi*—O mio babbino caro (Easton); *Sigurd*—Et toi, Freia (Reinaud); *Monna Vanna*—Elle est à moi (Muratore); *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Voi lo sapete (Bellincioni).

Famous Records of the Past (Vol. 5). Voices of "The Golden Age." 1-10" disc (*FRP-5) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Per la Patria*—Bella Italia (Battistini); *Ariadne auf Naxos*—Es gibt ein Reich (Jeritzka); *Pagliacci*—O Colombina (Daddi); *Siberia*—Non edi la il mortir (Storchio); *Siberia*—Cari ed avari (De Luca); *Nerone*—V'amai dal di che il cuor (Galeffi); *Manon Lescaut*—In quelle trine morbide (Ferrari); *Werther*—Pourquoi me réveiller (Van Dyck); *Fedora*—O grandi occhi (Bellincioni); *Adriana Lecouvreur*—No piu nobile (Caruso); *Otello*—Era la notte (Maurel).

Once one accepts the basic idea behind Volumes 4 and 5 of "Famous Records of the Past," they can become very fascinating. The idea is that the original creators of famous operatic roles, having had the benefit of the composer's coaching, are able to give definitive performances. There are, however, a couple of fallacies: first, that the composer was always able to convey to the artist what he wanted (we know, for example, that Verdi could; but what about the young Puccini or the youthful Giordano?); and second, that when the recordings were made usually quite a few years after the event, how much had the interpretation been changed, either consciously or unconsciously? And how much should one trust the creator of a role who, some fifteen or so years after the premiere, brings his own claque to the recording studio?

Despite the doubts raised in the preceding paragraph, however, these two modestly priced discs offer much food for thought and provide more than a modicum of education. Chief interest centers around Cesari Ferrani's delineation of two Puccini heroines, Manon and Mimi. Both arias are sung much the same as they are today, although Ferrani seems to be putting a little more feeling into the words and music than most present day singers are either able or willing to do. This writer got quite a shock hearing Van Dyck, the original Werther. Perhaps the recording was at fault, for the disc of *Pourquoi me réveiller* is really terrible. Gemma Belincioni, the original Santuzza and Princess Fedora, screams her way through *Voi lo sapete* and *O grandi occhi* in an unpleasant fashion—perhaps she was better on the stage. Other operas, such as *Siberia*, *Sappho*, *Zaza* and *Sigurd* are primarily of academic interest. The brief excerpt from *Pélleas et Mélisande* (Mary Garden) is lovely, as is the *Jeritza*-Strauss excerpt. One could also wish for another Lucian Muratore—his *Monna Vanna* aria is both stylish and beautiful.

The sound here is, of course, very primitive. Most of the discs probably date from the first decade of the present century, and one must make all sorts of allowances.

W.



VOCAL

Debussy: La Damoiselle élue. One side, and **Berlioz: Les Nuits d'Été.** Victoria de los Angeles with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1907) \$3.98.

Schubert Lieder. Lucretia West (soprano) accompanied by Leo Taubmann (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18090) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc in folder (*WEST-WN-18090) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *An die Musik; Dem Unendlichen; Wanderers Nachtlied; Seligkeit; Die Liebe hat gelogen; Rastlose Liebe; Der Tod und das Mädchen; Wiegenlied; Schlummerlied; Fischerweise; Im Abendrot; Nacht und Träume; Geistertanz; Widerschein; Wehmut.*

This pairing of Debussy and Berlioz is a curious and, at the same time, a happy and informative one. Debussy once signed himself *musicien français*, an action that seemed to infuriate British critic Cecil Gray, who wrote "Debussy is the least French of musicians. . . . His best work is that which is most exotic and least French; his greatest quality, his only quality, lies in the wholly personal and entirely original nature of his art. . . . *La Damoiselle élue* (is) not the offspring of the ancient lineage of Rameau and Couperin, but the guilty fruit of liaisons with the *Manon Lescaut* and *Marie-Magdalene* of Jules Massenet. The influence of Massenet is the only French element in the music of Debussy,

and it is an influence which he never succeeded in throwing off." Be all this as it may, this present performance of *La Damoiselle élue*, the fourth on LP, is a sumptuous one with Victoria de los Angeles and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, both gorgeous musical creations, in top form.

It is a true *musicien français* whose song-cycle, *Les Nuits d'Été*, occupies the balance of the record. This is the third recording of these extraordinary songs, and it must be accounted the best by virtue of Miss de los Angeles' exquisite voice and expressive singing. In addition, there are the authoritative accompaniments supplied by Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony Orchestra and superior sound by RCA Victor.

Equally fine singing, but of a different order, is demonstrated by Lucretia West in a recital of Schubert *lieder*. Miss West has artfully selected fifteen *lieder*, some familiar, some almost exotic. In the latter category one must place such songs as *Geistertanz* and *Widerschein*, both of which are beautifully sung. The more familiar items, *An die Musik*, *Der Tod und das Mädchen* and *Wiegenlied*, are also sung with rare vocal beauty and consummate artistry. In fact, the entire record is full of truly first-class *lieder* singing and can be recommended without reserve.

W.

Beethoven: Gellert Lieder, Op. 48. One side, and **Schubert: Schwanengesang, Op. 23, No. 3.** Inez Matthews (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Lowell Farr (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-717) \$4.98.

Schubert had intended to publish thirteen songs, seven based on lyrics by Rellstab and six on lyrics by Heine, as a cycle with a dedication to his friends. At the head of the cycle he had placed another song, *Lebensmut*, which only survives in fragmentary form. After Schubert's death, the publisher Haslinger, assisted by Ferdinand Schubert, published the thirteen songs and added Schubert's last song and gave the set the conventionally sentimental title of *Schwanengesang* ("Swan Songs"). Many of the songs in the collection are among Schubert's finest, for they include the ever-popular *Serenade*; *Die Stadt*, with the town "dimly visible through the mist across the gray canal;" and *Das Fischermädchen*, which Einstein describes as "a rather courtly and yet in some ways sinister barcarolle." Then there is the powerful *Die Doppelgänger*, concerning which, writes Alfred Einstein again, "we are standing (here) on the threshold of a new development." For these, and the other songs, a very superior type of singer is required. An earlier review (TNR June '55) mentions the obvious fact that Miss Matthews has a gorgeous voice; not so obvious, but still noticeable, is the lack of background or experience required to project these songs in all their power and in a manner that will demonstrate the inner meaning and underlying philosophy Schubert wrote into them.

Miss Matthews is happier in the Beethoven songs that do not require the psychological insights the

Schubert *lieder* demand. These songs, including the well known *Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur* and *Busslied*, are all very well sung by any standards.

Texts and translations are furnished. The review copy of these songs may have been a faulty pressing, for there were numerous buzzings and rattles. Better check this one first, both from the mechanical and artistic viewpoint. W.

Millöcker: Der Bettelstudent ("The Beggar Student"). (Sung in German). Wilma Lipp, Esther Rethy (sopranos); Rosette Anday (contralto); Rudolf Christ, Kurt Preger (tenors); Eberhard Waechter (baritone); Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Anton Paulik. 2-12" discs in album (*VAN-VRS-474/5) \$9.96.

Karl Millöcker's operetta, *Der Bettelstudent*, will probably be unfamiliar to most American music lovers. Millöcker (1842-1899) was one of a triumvirate of Viennese operetta composers who flourished in the latter part of the last century, the others being, of course, Suppé and Johann Strauss, Jr. *Der Bettelstudent* was first performed in Vienna on 6 December 1882 and was an immediate hit and traveled around the world in translation. It now ranks second only to *Die Fledermaus*, to which it bears a very close "family" resemblance, in the Viennese public's affections.

The cast for this recording features such outstanding singers as Wilma Lipp, Rosette Anday and Rudolf Christ. All three are of true operatic calibre, and this excursion into light opera finds them equipped vocally in a manner far exceeding that of the usual practitioner of this sort of music. The other members of the cast are all veterans of this type of activity and give solid performances that keep the production moving along at a good rate. In fact, there is an air of familiarity about the whole affair brought about, in all probability, by the fact that principals and supporting artists were very well acquainted both with the music and with each other.

Unfortunately, Vanguard has supplied only the English text and, since the operetta is sung in German, it is of little or no help. There is a scholarly essay on the work by Otto Deutsch and some excellent recorded sound.

The music is very tuneful, humorous in an Austrian way, and it can provide an evening of good clean musical fun for those so inclined. If you liked *Fledermaus*, *Zigeunerbaron* and the like, don't overlook *Der Bettelstudent*. W.

Debussy: Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien. Claudine Collart (soprano) with supporting soloists and narrator the Chorus of the Radiodiffusion and Télévision Française and l'Orchestre du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées conducted by D. E. Inghelbrecht. 2-12" discs in box (*L-DTL-93040/1) \$9.96.

The Debussy-d'Annunzio collaboration on *Le*

Martyre de Saint Sebastien was joined, in the early years after the first World War, by D. E. Inghelbrecht who, realizing that Debussy's music would be lost to a great section of the public if it were permanently wed to d'Annunzio's "too literary" drama, devised a "form of oratorio in which *Le Martyre de Saint Sebastien* might reveal itself in all its perfection." This new form of the work, then, as devised and arranged in accord with the two authors, presumably received their collective blessing. It is recorded here by M. Inghelbrecht, himself, and consequently may be considered definitive.

This new (at least to this writer) form of the piece is very enlightening. The incidental music, as it is usually recorded, leaves a rather fragmentary impression—seems lacking in intestinal fortitude and is, to put it bluntly, spineless. Now, however, this recording with its effective use of a narrator, shows the score in a very different light. André Falcon does a remarkable job—even for one whose French is decidedly rusty, as is this writer's. The soloists are very good, but special praise must be reserved for Mlle. Collart, who does her job to perfection. Under D. E. Inghelbrecht's inspired direction the orchestral portions of the score become astonishingly dramatic.

The recorded sound is extremely fine, and it could not have been too easy a job, what with the orchestra, chorus, soloists and narrator. The tonal balance is fine, and both quantity and quality of sound are all that could be desired. It is a pity, however, that London could not have seen fit to furnish a libretto; for this, after all, is an English speaking country. W.

Canzone Scordate ("Forgotten Songs") (Arr. Dorumsgaard) (Vol. II). Aksel Schiotz (baritone) and Richard Lewis (tenor) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-TW-91067) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: Bellman: (9) Songs (Sung in Swedish) (Schiotz); Dowland: (7) Songs (Sung in English) (Lewis).

This, the second volume of *Canzone Scordate* ("Forgotten Songs") suffers from the same defect that afflicted Volume 1 (TNR Aug. '53); i.e., no texts for the songs. Now, when the language is other than English (and often even when it is English), the great majority of us require the original texts and an English version to make any sort of sense of the music. To omit such information is inexcusable in such a release as this, and yet it has been done in this case—unblushingly so.

Aside from the foregoing stricture, Volume 2 is a sheer joy. Carl Michael Bellman (1750-1795) is the first "forgotten man" to be represented, and he turns out to be a character fight out of the middle ages—troubador, lutanist, poet, musician—apparently he could do everything but regulate his life to keep out of debt (he died a pauper). There are nine songs of his recorded here and, aside from a few

titles (such as *Appear, O God of Night; Empty your Glass; Weep, Father Berg*; and so on), there is little to tell about them because your correspondent does not understand any Swedish. Melodious they certainly are—Bellman is supposed to have adapted melodies from all sources: French opera, musical comedy, Haydn, Handel, Gluck—all were grist for his mill. They are sung here by Aksel Schiotz, now a baritone, and one is gratified to be able to report that Herr Schiotz is an even better baritone than he was a tenor; and, of course, his fine musical intelligence is still on the same high level.

Side two contains seven songs by John Dowland (1563-1626), who is not nearly so forgotten as Bellman. These are songs in the great Elizabethan tradition and are well and understandingly sung by Richard Lewis. Included are *Weep no more, sad fountains; Come away sweet love; Dear, if you change; A Shepherd in the shade; Flow not so fast, ye fountains; Whoever thinks or hopes of love and Sorrow stay*.

A special word of praise must be said for Jacqueline Bonneau's accompaniments which are so tastefully and deftly accomplished. Her touch and general musicianship add much to the success of the disc.

W.

Weill: (12) Theatre Songs. Lotte Lenya (vocals) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-KL-5056) \$5.98.

CONTENTS: *Die Dreigroschenoper*—Moritat, Barbarasong, Seeräuber-Jenny; *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*—Havanna-Lied, Alabama-Song, Wie man sich bettet; *Happy End*—Bilbao-Song, Surabaya Johnny, Matrosen-Tango; *Das Berliner Requiem*—Vom ertrunkenen Mädchen; *Der Silbersee*—Lied der Fennimore, Cäsars Tod.

Lotte Lenya can reflect at once both the squalor and the beauty of pre-Hitler Berlin, and she is the outstanding singer of such theatre songs as these today. Kurt Weill's talents are well known in this country, and those who like his songs will undoubtedly be pleased with Fraulein Lenya's interpretations of them. All save one (Alabama-Song) are sung in German, but both German and English texts are supplied in a 7-page insert bound into this folder-type sleeve.

Do not be misled by the cover of this disc, which reads "Berlin Theatre Songs by Kurt Weill;" "Berlin" means Berlin, Germany, not Irving Berlin. If you have never sampled any of Weill's Theatre Songs, you'd better try this one first.

Calypso. Edric Connor and the Southlanders. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18096) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18096) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Long Time Carnival; Ugly Woman; Glory Mama, Glory; Mission to the U. N. O.; Courthouse Scandal; Story of Mr. Paul; Police Force; Jolly Good Fellows; Friends; Mango Tree;*

Marabella Wedding; Democracy; Animal Concert in a Cemetery.

This is the first Calypso record we ever heard where the singer did not have some pretentious name like "Duke of Iron," "Atilla the Hun," or some such. We don't know who Edric Connor is, but he gets the credit for writing the notes on the jacket liner of the factory-sealed edition of this enchanting disc. We might add that high fidelity has certainly been a boon to lovers of Calypso music, for the words are the whole point of the songs, and due to the distortion of the words in the presentation of the numbers (the accent is on the wrong syl-a-ble), extreme clarity is required to catch the meanings. Westminster's "Natural Balance" is superb reproduction, to be sure, and Mr. Connor and his merry bunch of instrumentalists will be certain to please the aficionados of this sort of thing.



ORGAN

Organ Recital (Vol. I). Richard Purvis, playing the organ in the Grace Cathedral, San Francisco. 1-12" disc (*HI-FIR-703) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Trumpet Tune* (Purcell); *Arioso* (Bach); *Greensleeves* (Purvis); *Processional* (Shaw); *Supplication* (Purvis); *Pavanne* (Elmore); *Capriccio on the Notes of the Cuckoo* (Purvis); *Symphony No. 5—Toccata* (Widor).

Organ Recital (Vol. II). Richard Purvis, playing the organ in the Grace Cathedral, San Francisco. 1-12" disc (*HI-FIR-704) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *March Grotesque* (Purvis); *Sheep May Safely Graze* (Bach); *Pièce Héroïque* (Franck); *Cortège et Litanie* (Dupré); *Nocturne* (Purvis); *Les Petites Cloches* (Purvis); *Adagissimo* (Dupré); *Toccata Festiva* (Purvis).

Grace Cathedral (Episcopal) in San Francisco has an organ which many claim to be one of the finest in our country, and it is aided by the wonderful acoustics of the building—a reverberation time of nearly five seconds. The organist of the Cathedral is a distinguished American artist, formerly of Philadelphia, who also has a long list of organ compositions to his credit. Purvis is not only well-equipped technically, he is blessed with an exceptional ability as a colorist and as one able to make genuine music come out of an organ. His artistry is of high order in every respect.

The two discs offered here contain a varied and nicely balanced assortment of organ music, comprising shorter works often heard in recitals, some of them familiar, some of them lesser known. The half dozen of Purvis' own numbers show him not only as an original thinker in this line but also as one who has his audience in mind by keeping the music on an interesting plane. These discs are designed to give pleasure, which they will to anyone

interested in organ music.

The reverberation time of five seconds referred to above may cause some to wonder whether the reproduction of this disc is successful. Remarkable indeed is the word for the reproduction, for there is no hint of the echo in this building. We are aware of resonance, but there is positively no smear anywhere on these sides. This is quite a feat of recording of which the HI-FI company may well be proud (its standard of organ recording is as good as you can hear today, notably the popular records by George Wright). Those with hi-fi equipment will delight in the magnificent bass tones on these discs, and the full organ effects such as in *Pièce Héroïque*. This pair is highly recommended as among the best in organ records. S.

Encores. George Wright at the Mighty Wurlitzer. 1-12" disc (*HI-FI R-702) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Slaughter on 10th Avenue* (Rodgers); *Tumbling Tumbleweed*; *Brazilian Sleigh Bells*; *Silver Moon*; *Sentimental Journey*; *Anna*; *Chit-Chat Polka*; *Quiet Village*; *Petite Waltz*; *Crazy Rondo*; *American Patrol*.

The sequel to Mr. Wright's earlier disc (TNR Aug. '55), and its equal, is herewith presented. Lightweight stuff which will really woof and tweet from 16 to 16,000 cycles per second.

PIANO

Ravel Piano Music (complete). Vlado Perlemuter (piano) with the Concerts Colonne Orchestra conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 3-12" discs in album (*VX-DL-153) \$19.50.

CONTENTS: *Miroirs*; *Gaspard de la Nuit*; *Valses nobles et sentimentales*; *Le Tombeau de Couperin*; *Jeux d'Eaux*; *Pavane pour une Infante defunte*; *Menuet sur le Nom de Haydn*; *Menuet antique*; *Sonatine*; *Prélude*; *Concerto in G*; *Concerto for the Left Hand Alone*.

The complete piano music of Ravel comes to us on three LP discs issued in a limited edition of 5000 albums, and housed in a container that is elegant and practical. There is also a twelve-page booklet that is informative and well written as well as beautiful to look at. This plush package also contains some mighty fine music. Vlado Perlemuter had the usual history of prize winning at an early age and appointment at the Paris Conservatory. But of real importance is the fact that he had the privilege of studying all of Ravel's works with the composer, himself. Thus the phonograph brings us still another artist of commanding stature with whom we were unfamiliar, but who is undoubtedly authoritative.

The orchestra appears only in the two Concerti, which may surprise some after reading the list of contents above; but it must be remembered that Ravel wrote comparatively few works for orchestra. Some of his most famous works were first composed

as piano pieces and later orchestrated. Ravel was primarily a composer, and as such he was gifted in knowing the full potentialities of the piano, although he was not an especially fine pianist himself. He was also one of the great orchestrators of all time and knew how to use the orchestral palette as did few others.

This superb set features piano playing of extraordinary quality by Vlado Perlemuter, whose sensitive coloring is on a par with his exceptional ability. He is exceeded by few pianists on discs, and only one could be compared to Perlemuter in his playing of Ravel. This notable exception is, of course, Robert Casadesu, who has three discs devoted to the same assignment. Which of these artists is greater in accomplishment is a point which Ravel experts may well find interesting. We can offer nothing but praise for the present set and recommend it musically and mechanically as completely successful. S.

Bowles: A Picnic Cantata. Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale (duo-pianists) with Gloria Davy and Martha Flowers (sopranos), Mareda Gaither (mezzo-soprano), Gloria Wynder (contralto) and Al Howard (drums). One side, and **Poulenc: Sonata for Two Pianos** (1953). Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5068) \$3.98.

Columbia's editors apparently feel that Paul Bowles' *A Picnic Cantata* is the more important of the two works presented on this disc, for the cover of the jacket of this record features the Cantata very prominently; and, because the complete text is printed on the back of the jacket, nearly three-quarters of the notes are devoted to it. In our opinion, if Mr. Bowles had never written the work, the world would be no poorer. Four girls go on a picnic in their car on a Sunday, get lost on the way, discuss a modicum of philosophy, the food, country air, the Sunday papers, and go home.

Francis Poulenc's latest *Sonata for Two Pianos* was dedicated to the present artists, is in four movements, and has deceiving simplicity. It is a lovely work which will appeal to many persons, especially those who already have an affinity for the keyboard works of Poulenc. Messrs. Gold and Fizdale display an obvious feeling for the work as well as sure and impeccable dexterity on the keyboards. It is a shame that the purchaser must, perforce, accept the lightweight Bowles' work with the welcome Poulenc; nevertheless, we are so much impressed with the latter that we will recommend the disc anyway.

Kabalevsky: (24) Preludes. Nadia Reisenberg (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18095) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18095) \$4.98.

Dmitri Borisovich Kabalevsky (1904-) is principally known in this country for his ballet, *The Comedians*, Op. 26, although he has written many other works worthy of note. The present (24) *Pre-*

ludes were written as a unit, proceeding through all the keys of the tempered system in the order of key signatures (C, A minor, G, E minor, etc.); they have no apparent aim, nor is the music descriptive, like Debussy's. Rather they employ folk material and depict moods, and they illustrate the many colors of the piano tone.

Nadia Reisenberg was well-chosen for this recording, having like the composer, been born in Russia and being an accomplished soloist. This is the only recording of the Kabalevsky *Preludes* presently in the catalogs, and it is a worthy one; we welcome this lovely music to the recorded repertoire.

The Siena Pianoforte (Vol. III). Marisa Regules, playing the Siena Pianoforte. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ESP-3002) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Danzas Gitanas* (Turina); *Airs of Spain* (Albéniz); *The Baby's Family* (Villa-Lobos); *Scènes d'Enfants* (Mompou).

Last November we reviewed the first two volumes of discs featuring the Siena Pianoforte, a most remarkable instrument with an even more remarkable history. Readers are referred to that issue for a fuller story of this instrument. The discs were accepted as showing off the unusual qualities of the Siena Pianoforte, which the present works certainly do not do nearly so well. Miss Regules plays this Spanish music in fine style, and if you are interested in these pieces, the present disc is a good one; but if you are interested in the Siena Pianoforte, either Volume I or II is indicated.



DICTION

Homage to Dylan Thomas. Louis MacNeice, Hugh Griffith, Emlyn Williams and Richard Burton (reading). 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18076) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18076) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Requiem Canto* (MacNeice); *Return Journey* (Thomas, read by Griffith); *The Hunchback in the Park* and *Poem in October* (Thomas, read by Burton); *A Visit to Grandpa's* (Thomas, read by Williams); *Fern Hill* (Thomas, read by Burton).

Dylan Thomas (Vol. III). Dylan Thomas, reading his own poems. 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1043) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *A Few Words of a Kind* (introduction); *On the Marriage of a Virgin*; *The Hunchback in the Park*; *Over Sir John's Hill*; *Light Breaks Where No Sun Shines*; *After the Funeral*; *In Country Sleep*.

"This record was made during the Memorial Programme entitled 'Homage to Dylan Thomas,' sponsored by *The Sunday Times* and staged by The Group Theatre at the Globe Theatre, London, January 24th, 1954.

"The proceeds are being made over to the Dylan Thomas Memorial Fund . . ."

With these words we are introduced to a recorded tribute to Dylan Thomas, whose recorded and written works have certainly made their effect upon the English-speaking peoples of the world. His Caedmon records, actual recordings of Thomas reading his own work, have been best-sellers for records of their type, and Westminster's wonderful recording of *Under Milk Wood* (TNR Oct. '55) has made Dylan's many fans and admirers very grateful.

Dame Edith Sitwell has written a moving tribute which adorns the jacket liner of the factory-sealed edition of the present Westminster disc, and Messrs. Griffith, Burton and Williams read Thomas' lines with all the humor and pathos required. The whole is preceded with Louis MacNeice's *Requiem Canto*, his personal eulogy to the Welshman, read by the author. Extremely good reproduction, and a worthwhile disc, if only for the fine readings of Dylan Thomas' poems.

The Caedmon disc listed above is Volume 3 of the recorded works of Dylan Thomas read by himself, and we do not know of three similar records which have sold better. Mr. Thomas is an excellent reader (unlike many poets, we fear); it is always a pleasure to put one of his discs on the turntable and listen to his mellifluous voice reciting his melodious poems. For the benefit of our readers who may have missed the earlier Caedmon discs, we are listing them below, with their contents:

Volume I: *Fern Hill*; *A Child's Christmas in Wales*; *Do Not Go Gentle*; *In the White Giant's Thigh*; *Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait*; *Ceremony After a Fire Raid*. 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1002) \$5.95.

Volume II: *Lament*; *Poem on His Birthday*; *Should Lanterns Shine*; *There Was a Saviour*; *A Refusal to Mourn the Death, by Fire, of a Child in London*; *If I Were Tickled by the Rub of Love*; *And Death Shall Have No Dominion*; *A Winter's Tale*.

The contents of Volume 3 are listed in the heading above. J.

Adventures of Old Sam and The Ramsbottoms.

Stanley Holloway (monologist) with piano accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*ANG-65019) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Albert and the Lion*; *Albert Comes Back*; *Runcorn Ferry*; *Albert and the Headsman*; *Jubilee Sovereign*; *Anne Boleyn* ("With 'er 'ead Tucked Underneath 'er Arm"); *Marksmen Sam*; *One Each Apiece*; *Sam's Medal*; *Sam Drummed Out*; *The 'ole in the Ark*; *Jonah and the Grampus*.

In October, 1954, we reviewed an LP disc by Wallace House, and although we welcomed the disc, it was for the content and not especially for the performances. For there is no one like Stanley Holloway in these priceless bits of Lancashire humor. The present LP is taken from the original

78's, and a superb dubbing job this is, for we can understand every word—a thing we couldn't always do on our old 78's.

For those of our readers too young to remember these nearly 20-year-old records, Albert Ramsbottom is the predecessor of Dennis the Menace; he gets into all kinds of trouble, such as being swallowed by a lion, and inciting the ghost of the 'eadsman to appear; his father shows him a trick, pretending to swallow a sovereign, then bringing it back out of his ear, and Albert grabs the sovereign and "performed the first part of the trick." Sam Small is a stubborn Lancashire private who upsets the army no end, but always emerges the hero. And Stanley Holloway is the hero of this disc; we surely hope that the younger collectors will investigate this disc, and that our older friends will get this new one to see how superior it is to their older 78's.

Italian As You Hear It. 3-10" discs and textbook in album (*ZODIAC 2003) \$14.95.

In April, 1955, we reviewed two other Zodiac language courses, *French As You Hear It* (*ZODIAC 2001, \$14.95) and *Spanish As You Hear It* (*ZODIAC 2002, \$14.95). We described the French course in some detail and reported that the Spanish was just like it. Now Zodiac has issued an Italian course covering the same material. As with both the French and Spanish courses, no English is spoken on the discs, but translations are given in the textbook; there are several speakers on the discs, giving a nice variety to the student.

Students desiring a more complete language instruction course are referred to the Linguaphone courses presently available (\$57.50 for most languages); but for one who wishes a less expensive course, but who would like to make a relatively extensive investigation of French, Spanish or Italian the Zodiac courses are highly recommended. Each course is complete on 3-10" LP (33-1/3 rpm) discs; the albums are compact, and the surfaces of the discs are like glass.

MISCELLANEOUS



Sounds of Carnival. Recorded "On Location" at the Royal American Shows. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-FPX-126) \$5.95.

Merry-Go-Round Music. Carousel Selections. 1-10" disc (*AUDIO-FIDELITY AFLP-901) \$4.

Although these two discs have very little to do with each other, there is some connection; and because of lack of space, we are grouping them for consideration.

The Folkways disc contains authentic carnival sounds, featuring crowds, barkers, clowns, animals, and the mechanical sounds of the midway. The foregoing are on one side, and the reverse features

carousel music (*Over the Waves*, *Ta-Ra-Ra-Boom-De-A*, etc.). We guess if Emory Cook can sell sounds of a burlesque show (*Burlesque Uncensored*, *SOT-1071, \$3.98, TNR Jan. '55), Folkways may be able to sell a few of these carnival sounds to someone who can't get to one of these travelling circuses and wishes to hear some familiar sounds to bring back memories. The sound is far from hi-fi, but it is certainly more than acceptable for the purposes of the disc.

Audio Fidelity has captured some merry-go-round music in hi-fi for the audiophile wishing to show off his equipment. *Glow Worm*, *Doggie in the Window*, and *I'll Dance at Your Wedding* are three of the eleven numbers recorded; the frequency range is stated as being 16 to 20,000 cycles per second.

Torchy Lullabies My Mother Sang Me. Lizzie Miles (vocals) with Tony Almerico's Parisian Room Band and Red Camp (piano). 1-12" disc (*SOT-1184) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Alexander's Ragtime Band*; *Hou Could I Feel Blue?*; *I Ain't Got Nobody*; *Darktown Strutters' Ball*; *Melancholy Baby*; *The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else*; *Somebody Loves Me*; *Baby, Lemme Bring My Clothes Back Home*; *Lonesomest Gal*; *Strut It Babe*; *Mammy's Little Coal Black Rose*; *Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate*; *Dinah*; *Let the Rest of the World Go By*.

The Jawbone of an Ass. Cuban instrumental groups. 1-12" disc (*SOT-1083) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Jawbone of an Ass*; *Squeezing*; *The Peanut Vendor*; nine others.

Steel Band Clash. Steel Bands of Antigua, B. W. I. 1-12" disc (*SOT-1040) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *In the Mood*; *On the Sunny Side of the Street*; *Over the Waves*; twelve others.

We earnestly hope that no one ever judges a Cook Sounds of our Times record by its title. If anyone would have told us we'd like a record called *Jawbone of an Ass*, we'd have done a double-take and thought he was crazy. You might not like an essay on Cuban jazz, but it's really not at all hard to take. Lizzie Miles (see TNR May '55) thunders her way through a number of lullabies she claims her mother taught her; we question whether her mother ever taught her *The One I Love Belongs to Somebody Else*, a reasonably modern tune, but the rest of the numbers are good, old-time jazz and blues songs, and we doubt that Mère Miles could shout them as well as her daughter. . . . TNR readers are already familiar with the Steel Bands of Antigua (TNR Sept. '55), and if you liked the earlier record, you'll surely want this, too.

Emory Cook is still producing the finest records made today; and the more unusual the title, the more intriguing are the contents.

VIOLIN



Erica Morini Plays. Erica Morini (violin) accompanied by Leon Pommers (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18087) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18087) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Ave Maria* (Schubert); *Caprice Viennois*, *Schön Rosemarin*, *Liebeslied* (Kreisler); *Midnight Bells* (Heuberger); *Neapolitan Song*, Op. 39, No. 18 (Tchaikovsky); *Orfeo — Mélodie* (Gluck); *Faust—Waltz* (Gounod); *Sicilienne* (Paradis); *Chant sans Paroles*, Op. 2, No. 3 (Tchaikovsky); *Concerto Romantique—Canzonetta* (Godard); *Spanish Dance* (Chaminade); *Menuett in D*, No. 1 (Mozart).

Tastes don't change, we guess, and the same little violin pieces on records that sold well thirty years ago are still available and still selling today. Only now they're dressed up in the latest hi-fi reproduction, and you get 13 for four or five dollars instead of two for two dollars. Miss Morini is capable of bigger things, but she tosses these off in fine fashion.

BAND



Band Concert. The Allentown Band conducted by Albertus L. Meyers. 1-12" disc (*WFB-WH-1202L) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Salute to Allentown* (Wetherold); *National Spirit* (Hummel); *Hands Across the Border* (Gagnier); *Hands Across the Sea* (Sousa); *Game Preserve* (Meyers); *Hampden Firemen* (Rehrer); *Entry of the Gladiators* (Fucik-Laurendeau); *Brooke's Chicago Marine Band March* (Seitz); *Oneida* (Althouse); *Finlandia* (Sibelius — arr. Cailliet); *Cumana* (Allen—arr. Cailliet); *Perpetuum Mobile* (Strauss); *Irish Washerwoman* (Anderson); *The Angelus* (Buys).

Band Concert. The Allentown Band conducted by Albertus L. Meyers. 1-7" disc (ΦWFB-WH-1203EA) \$1.49.

CONTENTS: *The Irish Washerwoman* (Anderson); *Perpetuum Mobile* (Strauss); *Entry of the Gladiators* (Fucik-Laurendeau); *Cumana* (Allen—arr. Cailliet).

In December we reviewed a very fine little Christmas 45 rpm disc by the Allentown Band, and we now welcome a larger sampling via the present LP disc. The demand for good marching band records will apparently never be satiated, and WFB has wisely placed all the marches on one side of the disc and the concert numbers on the other. This disc has superb fidelity, and the Allentown Band is a marvelously precisioned organization.

The 45 rpm disc listed above is a smaller sampling which whets one's appetite for the larger record.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Fabulous Phonograph. By Roland Gelatt. 320 pp. Illustrated. J. B. Lippincott Company (Philadelphia and New York). Price \$4.95.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓞ Indicates 45 rpm.

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

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The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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WITH THIS ISSUE the twenty-third volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed, and we look forward with anticipation to our twenty-fourth year. Although we have reviewed many thousands of records these many years, we never fail to get that old thrill as we look over the batch of discs for the succeeding month. We are grateful to the record manufacturers who have attempted to see that our tastes do not become jaded by continuing to find new things to record. We are grateful to our staff for making our deadlines (usually) each month. And we are especially grateful to our many readers who have expressed encouragement to us from time to time.

Many new subscribers have added their names to our list in the last twelve months, and we should like to take this opportunity to welcome them. We wish also to express our appreciation to our host of "old timers," a great many of whom have been with us for twenty-three years. We wish to reassure them that our aim remains the same: to keep our readers advised of all new recordings in the classical field, giving full reviews to the most important items and a brief mention of others. Space in our little bulletin is still at a premium; we shall continue to stretch it as much as we can.

* * *

NOTE: If you are one of our readers who ordered a copy of *The Long Playing Record Guide* by Warren De Motte and your order has not yet been filled, please be patient. After our review (in our January issue) of this remarkable little book, which sells by mail for 60¢, hundreds of orders came pouring in; after the first hundred or so were sent out and friends of our readers saw them, orders just snowballed; and we have not dug ourselves

out yet. A second printing of this interesting item is under way, and we are sure that all orders will be filled by 15 February; from then on, books should go out the same day orders are received. Thanks for your patience.

RENEWALS

A large majority of subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If your subscription still has some months to run, we will extend it for an additional twelve months upon receipt of your renewal at this time. Each year we send renewal blanks to everyone with the February issue (the last number in the volume) and in March we check the subscription list and drop those whose subscriptions have expired during the last year and who have not renewed them.

CURRENT MARKET PRICE

The **Current Market Price** of records is the retail price that is charged by most leading dealers, including the publisher of this bulletin. When the major companies reduced their list prices for LP records, some of the smaller publishers reduced only their wholesale prices and did not change their list prices (see TNR Mar. '55); thus the **Current Market Price** came into being.

Also, from time to time, in order to stimulate business, some companies have drastically reduced prices for limited periods. In order that our readers may know the **Current Market Price**, we are indicating in this and future issues the prices that are presently in effect; and, although we cannot guarantee these prices, they should prevail during the current month.

NOTE: The **Current Market Price** of Westminster 5000-series is \$2.99.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-three years are available. The price is 10¢ each. A file of all the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning February 1953 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.)

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67. One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 8 in B minor** ("Unfinished"). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1923) \$3.98.

Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 3 in G, Op. 55. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1295) \$3.98.

As part of the 75th anniversary celebration of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, RCA Victor has released a pairing of two of the most familiar and sure-fire, best-selling symphonies in the literature of symphonic music. Strangely enough, this is the first such coupling, to our knowledge, and is a choice one for those beginning a library of good music. The reproduction is first rate in every respect, which makes this a disc to be recommended to most folks.

These works are so popular primarily because they are two of the finest symphonies ever written. For this reason we think it appropriate to use a severe critical standard for them. In the case of the Beethoven *Fifth*, this performance does not much more than scratch the surface. For those who take Beethoven seriously, and want a deep draught, this job will hardly slake their thirst. The performance is correct enough in the usual vein, well played, dutiful, and so on; but it is no match for Von Karajan (*ANG-35231), Steinberg (*CL-P-8292), or several others which get under the skin of the work and set forth the drama of the music in unmistakable terms. To those willing to listen and compare, we suggest doing just that. The Schubert "Unfinished" is much more to our liking, and is a very respectable job. If it lacks the distinctive profile of Beecham, Bohm, and a few others who have essayed this work so beautifully, the present one, nevertheless, is beautifully played in its own right.

The Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3 receives a complete

performance and a mighty good one at the hands of Sir Adrian Boult. A previous LP listing, though well played, is replaced by this fine one, which features excellent reproduction among its other assets. The fourth movement has been recorded a few times, as it is often played alone. This section is a theme and twelve variations which occupies one side of a 12" disc completely and is a satisfying composition in itself. Boult's way with the fourth movement, as well as with the first three, gives the work a stature that could easily help restore some of its lost popularity. S.

Mozart: (4) Symphonies. Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6035) \$7.98.

CONTENTS: *Symphonies Nos. 36 in C, K. 425* ("Linz"); 39 in E-flat, K. 543; 40 in G minor, K. 550; 41 in C, K. 551 ("Jupiter").

RCA Victor's contribution to the Mozart celebration this year is a sure-fire entry with a group of popular symphonies by one of the best groups on the Victor roster. Mozart's last three symphonies are the best loved, and the fourth one in this collection ties with the "Haffner" and "Prague" symphonies for the next place in the public's affection. These four make a fine package, being housed in a box and including a large eight page brochure with text and pictures, at no increase in price.

These performances show the Chicago Orchestra to good advantage, for their playing is admirable, with polish and style. It sounds as though just about the full string complement is used, and those who like a full sound in Mozart, rather than a reduced orchestra, will find this set much to their liking, for the reproduction is spacious and resonant. There is nothing tiny, baroque, miniature, or antique about this Mozart playing; it is very much as we usually hear it in the concert hall today. It lacks the proportion one hears when a group like the Philadelphia Orchestra plays Mozart — Ormandy usually reduces the orchestra sharply. But this set is admittedly pleasing to the ear, and we believe most folks will like it.

Reiner's readings of the several symphonies follow rather traditional lines. There is nothing exceptionally wrong or outstandingly different about any of them. Individually we would say the No. 39 is probably the best, No. 41 is also mighty good, and No. 40 is good except for a somewhat thick texture in the third movement, in which the large orchestra shows up a bit too much. No. 36, the "Linz" is good until the last movement, and for our taste this final movement is taken much too fast, losing all its grace and charm. The recent Bruno Walter version, among others, shows that Reiner is rough and choppy in this movement, sacrificing clarity and real music merely for speed. That, however, accounts for only one-sixteenth of all the movements in this album; so it is not enough to spoil the

pleasure of the whole set, which is generally quite excellent. This set will nicely take care of the Mozart corner of many a growing library. S.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 2 ("Lobgesang") (orchestral portion). One side, and **Cowell: Hymn and Fuguing Tunes Nos. 2 & 5.** And **Cowell: Ballad.** Vienna Orchestral Society conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN UNLP-1011) \$3.98.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 2 ("Lobgesang") (choral portion). Vienna Orchestral Society and the Chorus of the Vienna State Opera conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*UNICORN UNLP-1012) \$3.98.

Of more than passing interest are the Mendelssohn and Cowell works recorded here for the first time. For reasons that escape your reviewer, Unicorn has issued the Mendelssohn *Symphony No. 2* as though it existed in two versions, but actually the first disc (1011) contains the first three movements while the other record (1012) has the choral finale or fourth movement—one must buy both records to have the work complete. What amounts to the "odd" side is taken up with the Cowell pieces.

Mendelssohn wrote his *Lobgesang* or "Hymn of Praise" *Symphony* in 1840 for a celebration of the 400th anniversary of the invention of the printing press. It is a typically Mendelssohnian work, modeled on Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. It is described, in his list of compositions, as a "Symphony-Cantata." Musically it is lovely, nothing earth-shaking, but a neat, well-planned and tuneful forty or fifty minutes of music making. The Vienna Orchestral Society, the Vienna State Opera Chorus and the soloists all enter into the spirit of the occasion and do very well. F. Charles Adler provides direction aimed at emphasizing the "romantic" aspects of the score, which is the musical and intelligent thing to do.

The Cowell *Hymn and Fuguing Tunes* are also new to records. They turn out to be fine music, easy to listen to and, while original in treatment, still are somewhat reminiscent of Arthur Foote's *Suite in E Minor*. Perhaps the only common ground is that both Cowell and Foote are American composers.

The two discs are very well engineered and there are good jacket notes. Maybe Unicorn will issue the two records in an album sometime—the chances are this would increase its sale considerably. W.

Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique, Op. 14. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9783) \$3.98.

The Berlioz *Symphonie Fantastique* still seems to exercise its fascination for conductors and record companies. Here is still another version of the often-recorded score—this time it is Igor Markevitch and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra via Deutsche Grammophon and Decca.

The performance is a straightforward one; no excesses but also not too much imagination is vouch-

safed. Markevitch realizes most of the poetry inherent in the score but little of its drama, although, to be sure, some of the fire and passion is bound to show through even though the conductor does little more than make sure all the notes are being played correctly.

The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra is, as most record collectors know, a really first-class symphonic organization—on a par with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra which is, admittedly, one of the world's finest. Decca's sound, while good, does not come up to present day fidelity standards.

Of all the versions of the *Symphonie Fantastique*, this writer still prefers the one by Dorati and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra on Mercury. It being the most exciting and, in the main, best recorded performance extant. A second choice would include two—Monteux's "standard" version on RCA Victor and Munch's rather mannered recording with the Boston Symphony Orchestra for the same company. There are many who admire Ormandy's recording on Columbia, but your servant cannot be numbered among them.

It would be nice, now after having exhausted (it seems) the possibilities of (and the market for) the *Symphonie Fantastique*, if conductors and recording companies would turn their attention to some of Berlioz' lesser known scores (*King Lear Overture*, *Tristia*, *Les Fleurs des Landes* and *Irlande*) and make some of them available. W.

Torelli: (12) Concerti Grossi, Op. 8. Louis Kaufman and George Alès (violins), Roger Albin (violin cello) and Ruggero Gerlin (harpsichord) with l'Ensemble Orchestral de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Louis Kaufman. 2-12" discs in box (*OL-OL-50089/90) \$9.96.

Current Market Price: \$6.98.

Boccherini: Symphony in C, Op. 13, No. 3. One side, and **Boccherini: Symphony Funebre in B.** Vienna Orchestral Society conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*UNI-UNLP-1017) \$3.98.

The Messrs. Kaufman, *et al*, are certainly to be congratulated for giving us these wonderful *Concerti Grossi* by Giuseppe Torelli (1658-1709) in such splendid performances. They are not concertos in the modern sense of the word, there being very little solo work and that being hardly more than counterpoint for the orchestral or harpsichord continuo. Thus they are more orchestral than anything else, which accounts for the review being placed in this spot, rather than under CONCERTO. Nevertheless, it is not so much the form as the results that count, and we have more than once expressed our great taste for baroque Italian music; good performances are always welcome, especially when they are first (LP) recordings and reproduced with the superb clarity that l'Oiseau-Lyre

has lavished on this set.

The lately overworked F. Charles Adler gives us a pair of symphonies by Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805); these, too, are firsts on LP. Could it be that Herr Adler is showing signs of tiring? Even the *C major Symphony* seems to plod along (we expected the "Funebre" to be dirge-like, which it is; but it would seem that slightly faster tempi in the *C major* would be in order). The reproduction is very clear (you may wish to dampen the highs a little on this disc). It is unlikely that another version of these Symphonies will come along.

Chopin: Les Sylphides. One side, and **Strauss: Graduation Ball.** Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1919) \$3.98.

Corelli: Suite for Strings. One-half side, and **Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream—Overture, Scherzo, Nocturne, Wedding March.** One side, and **Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1, Op. 25 ("Classical").** Pro Musica Symphony of Hamburg conducted by Hans-Jurgen Walther. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3087) \$3.98.

Pop Concert Favorites (Vol. VII). Pro Musica Symphony of Hamburg conducted by Hans-Jurgen Walther. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3195) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *The Bartered Bride*—Polka, Furi-ant, Dance of the Comedians (Smetana); *Hungarian Dances Nos. 5 & 6* (Brahms); *Malagueña* (Lecuna); *Slavonic Dances Nos. 1, 3, & 10* (Dvořák); *In the Bottoms*—Juba Dance (Dett); *Jarabe Tapatío* (Trad.).

Smetana: The Moldau. And **Dvořák: Scherzo Capriccioso, Op. 66.** One side, and **Kodály: Dances of Galanta.** And **Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1.** Bamberg Symphony conducted by Jonel Perlea. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9500) \$4.98.

Orchestral Favorites. Various orchestras and conductors. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3177) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Akademische Festouvertüre, Op. 80* (Brahms); *Romance in C* (Sibelius); *March Slav* (Tchaikovsky); *A Children's Overture* (Quilter); *Fair at Sorochinsk—Gopak* (Moussorgsky); *Hansel and Gretel*—Witch's Ride (Humperdinck); *Sigurd Jorsalfar*—Homage March (Grieg).

Pop Concert Favorites (Vol. IV). Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by Hans-Jurgen Walther. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3143) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Greensleeves Fantasy* (Vaughan Williams); *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1* (Elgar); *Iolanthe — Overture* (Sullivan); *Nell Gwyn Suite*—Country Dance, Pastoral Dance, Merymakers' Dance (German); *London Suite*—Covent Garden, Westminster, Knightsbridge (Coates); *Shepherds' Fennel Dance* (Gardiner).

Six orchestral records devoted to ballet and lighter

music, most of it familiar and all of it charming. Since these are the sort of records that are purchased by the beginning collector just wondering what lies beyond the popular music of the day, we should not decry them; nevertheless, lack of space precludes detailed reviews. Suffice it to say the reproduction of each is satisfactory; even MGM seems to have improved its surfaces on these discs—they are fine.

Haydn: Symphony No. 96 in D ("Miracle"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 102 in B-flat.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*CML-5059) \$3.98.

A lovely coupling of two of Haydn's not-so-popular symphonies which respond well to Dr. Walter's loving direction and the expert playing of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

Brahms: Akademische Festouvertüre, Op. 80. And **Liszt: Les Preludes.** One side, and **Wagner: Siegfried Idyll.** And **Sibelius: Finlandia.** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9350) \$4.98.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a. And **Brahms: Akademische Festouvertüre, Op. 80.** One side, and **Brahms: Tragische Ouver-türe, Op. 81.** Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. And **Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53.** Monica Sinclair (contralto), Chorus of the Croydon Philharmonic Society, and the Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18035) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18035) \$4.98.

Sir Adrian Boult has the better of it between these two discs, but we hasten to add that all of the numbers presented here have adequate representation in the LP catalogs, and we can therefore see no need for either record.

Great Operatic Arias. Mantovani and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1331) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Aida*—Celeste Aida; *Madama Butterfly*—One Fine Day; *Rigoletto*—Caro Nome; *Martha*—M'Appari; *Samson et Dalila*—My Heart at thy Sweet Voice; *La Boheme*—Musetta's Waltz; *Gianni Schicci*—O My Beloved Daddy; *Carmen*—Habenera; *Tannhäuser*—Ode to the Evening Star; *Tosca*—E Lucevan le Stelle; *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Intermezzo; *La Traviata*—Brindisi.

Opera music for orchestra being as popular as it is, and Mantovani having built up legions of fans both by his records and by his recent personal appearances in this country, there's no question that this disc will be a best-seller; no further comment is required.

CONCERTO



Vivaldi: Il Cimento dell' Armonia e dell' Invenzione, Op. 8—I Quattro Stagione, La Tempesta di Mare. Virtuosi di Roma conducted by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-26) \$4.98.

Pergolesi: (6) Concertinos for Strings. Three sides, and **Pergolesi: Sonata in Stile de Concerto.** And **Pergolesi: Sinfonia for Violoncello and Strings.** I Musici. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35251/2TP) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3538B) \$9.98.

Albinoni: (6) Concerti. L'Ensemble de l'Oiseau-Lyre conducted by Louis de Froment, with Pierre Pierlot (oboe). 1-12" disc (*OL-OL-50041) \$4.98.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

CONTENTS: *Concertos for Oboe and Strings* in B-flat, Op. 7, No. 3; in D, Op. 7, No. 6; in F, Op. 7, No. 9; in C, Op. 7, No. 12. *Concertos a cinque* in D minor, Op. 5, No. 7; in B-flat, Op. 5, No. 1.

Pergolesi: Concertino in G. Michel Tournus (violin-cello) with l'Orchestre de Chambre Gérard Cartigny conducted by Gérard Cartigny. And **Durante: Divertimento in F minor.** L'Orchestre de Chambre Gérard Cartigny conducted by Gérard Cartigny. One side, and **Vivaldi: Concerto in G minor for 2 Cellos and Strings.** M. Tournus and G. Fleury (violin-cellos) with l'Orchestre de Chambre Gérard Cartigny conducted by Gérard Cartigny. 1-12" disc (*L-DTL-93044) \$4.98.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

A vertible flood of lovely Italian music arrived this month, and we list the outstanding ones above. The Virtuosi di Roma needs no introduction to readers of TNR, and the present LP disc of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* plus *La Tempesta di Mare* (all from *Il Cimento dell' Armonia e dell' Invenzione*) is a most pleasing disc, easily up to the high standards already set by this marvelous group. . . . I Musici, a group of 12 graduates of the Academy of St. Cecilia, Rome, has issued three other discs on the Angel label (TNR Feb. '55); the present Pergolesi set will prove no let-down from the standpoints either of performance or of choice of material. . . . The five Albinoni *Concertos for Oboe and Strings* and the two Concertos "a cinque" (i.e., in five parts) for strings will be new to most collectors; but they reflect the baroque Italian period, and will prove pleasing to collectors of music of this bygone era. . . . London Gramophone is now issuing records of the Ducretet-Thomson (European) Company in this country; and while the reproduction of all of the discs listed above is more than acceptable, the Ducretet-Thomson LP is especially to be commended, fidelity-wise. London-Ducretet-Thomson discs may be identified by the letters "DTL" in the catalog number; if this is an example, we shall eagerly look for more.

Larsson: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 42. Andre Gertler (violin) with the Stockholm Radio Orchestra conducted by Sten Frykberg. One side, and **Blomdahl: Pastoral Suite for Strings.** Stockholm Radio Orchestra conducted by Sten Frykberg. And **Fernström: Concertino (for Flute, Women's Chorus and Chamber) Orchestra, Op. 52.** Erik Holmstedt (flute), chorus and Stockholm Radio Orchestra conducted by Sten Frykberg. 1-12" disc in box (*L-TW-91091) \$4.98.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

Jongen: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 127. Edvardo del Pueyo (piano) with l'Orchestre National de Belgique conducted by Fernand Quintet. 1-10" disc (*L-W-91081) \$2.98.

Current Market Price: \$1.99.

Rasse: Concerto in C for Violin and Orchestra. Robert Hosselet (violin) with l'Orchestre National de Belgique conducted by René Défossez. 1-10" disc (*L-W-91063) \$2.98.

Current Market Price: \$1.99.

Swedish and Belgian music by composers largely unfamiliar to most of us is represented by the assortment of discs listed above. It would take several columns to do full justice to all of this music. The best work of the lot struck us as being Larsson's *Violin Concerto*, which has all the elements of a bang-up Concerto. Gertler, to whom the work is dedicated, plays it with fire and determination, and it comes off with a flourish. The first movement of this work is really quite a grateful thing for the solo instrument, and it is backed up with a rich orchestral accompaniment. Written in 1952, it has little of the modern in it, and apparently, shows a desire Larsson to make music rather than musical history.

Blomdahl is among the more progressive Swedish composers of today, and his string suite is built along angular lines and with oblique harmonies that bespeak the modern hand. It has some sonority, and the orchestra plays it nicely. Fernström's little *Concertino* is a pleasant affair that is easy to take even if it will never make the classical hit parade.

Joseph Jongen is known to organists for a few nice compositions and is probably known to some other performing artists for his compositions; but his name is not familiar to most folks, although he was considered a rather distinguished Belgian composer. His piano concerto is a nicely-paced work, somewhat according to formula and all that sort of thing, but it just did not quicken our pulse.

François Rasse is another minor composer whose music is pleasant but not of the major leagues. His *Violin Concerto* is facile and has moments of beauty and flashing inspiration. It is brilliantly performed on this disc and nicely recorded. The program notes, by the way, are entirely in French, in case that will help you any.

S.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9784) \$3.98.

Sibelius: Concerto in D minor, Op. 47. One side, and **Bruch: Concerto in G minor, Op. 26.** Ivry Gitlis (violin) with the Pro Musica Orchestra, Vienna, conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9660) \$4.98.

Those who dare to tackle the Beethoven *Violin Concerto* at a recording session these days are brave souls, for nearly every great artist has left a performance for posterity, and there are many fine LP's of this work now available. Wolfgang Schneiderhan is an eminent European violinist (and the husband of an equally famous artist, Irmgard Seefried) and was concertmaster of some famous orchestras, including the Vienna Philharmonic. That he is a master of his instrument is apparent before many moments have passed as this disc is played. His tone is not the broadest we have ever heard, but it is clear, true, and sweet, and his musicianship is from the top drawer. He is not of the persuasion that "the faster it is played the smarter they think you are school," and he takes things quite in stride. This is a fine reading, with splendid orchestral support and beautiful reproduction. It is not at the top of the heap among the LP's of the Beethoven *Concerto*, but it is admirable in its way.

Ivry Gitlis, a rising young violinist on the musical horizon, is heard in two concertos thoughtfully coupled on one disc which can also claim good reproduction. Gitlis does nobly by both works, but he did not give us the impression that he will put Franciscatti, Milstein, and a couple of others who have recorded the Bruch out of business. The Sibelius is deep water and Gitlis does surprisingly well with it, aided by strong orchestral support from Horenstein. Whether he gets as far beneath the surface as some others is an opinion we will not argue, but he seems to have a burning conviction about the work that we found communicative. The reproduction favors the violin nicely on this disc without hurting the orchestra. This one is worth investigating by violin fanciers. S.

Bruch: Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26. One side, and **Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 19.** David Oistrakh (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lovro von Maticic. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35243TP) \$3.48. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35243) \$4.98.

Chausson: Poème, Op. 25. And **Saint-Saëns: Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 28.** David Oistrakh (violin) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. One side, and **Berlioz: Romeo and Juliet—(2) excerpts.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1988) \$3.98.

This is Oistrakh month, these two discs being

the fifth and sixth Oistrakh discs your reviewer has had the pleasure to hear; they were saved for last and turned out to be the best and most satisfying to his ears. The Bruch and Prokofiev *Concertos* make a strange coupling, representing, in a way, the Alpha and Omega among the concerto repertoire. The Bruch, considered old hat and a vehicle for fledgling fiddlers, is a lovely work with beguiling melodies and nice form, and we always enjoy hearing it. Having just heard it a week or so ago with Isaac Stern and Ormandy (Pension Fund concert), we admit to the feeling that Oistrakh plays with more refinement, if with less dash and intensity, than Stern. Stern managed to churn up much more emotional storm all the way through, but Oistrakh presents a cool and impeccably played version that is as compelling for its neatness and sincerity. Oistrakh is a master fiddler who seems incapable of mangling any score, always reading it with nobility and musicianship. A number of other gentlemen have put this work on discs, including Milstein (*CL-P-8243), who coupled it with the Mendelssohn concerto, a disc of exceptional beauty. The Prokofiev *Concerto No. 1* is given a reading by Oistrakh that just about removes competitive versions, however excellent they may have been, for no one plays this difficult work with more clarity and expert management of its tricky passages than the estimable Russian. This is violin playing of a high order. The reproduction is first rate.

Oistrakh plays the Chausson *Poème* and Saint-Saëns work in his expected fashion. The Saint-Saëns is a model of clean playing which will cause those fiddlers trying to master its intricacies some frustration. We never heard it played better. The Chausson may have been heard with more breadth and warmth, but never with more purity of line; it, too, is a superlative job. The second side of the disc is devoted to two sections lifted from the complete recording made by the Boston Symphony (*V-LM-6011); it has nothing to do with Oistrakh, but plenty to do with wonderful music. S.

Chausson: Concerto in D, Op. 21. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Quatour Pascal de la Radiodiffusion française and Louis Kentner (piano). One side, and **Vieuxtemps: Concerto No. 5 in A minor, Op. 37.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) with the Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by John Pritchard. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-30) \$4.98.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. Mischa Elman (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1257) \$3.98.

Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 5 in A, K. 219.** Mischa Elman (violin) with the New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1271) \$3.98.

With the exception of the *Vieuxtemps Concerto*

No. 5, this entire lot was a grave disappointment to us. The Vieuxtemps is the least important among all the titles listed above, and Heifetz has provided a recording of this concerto which is not dislodged even by the fervent fiddling of Menuhin.

As for the other works, the Chausson was just released by Francescatti and Casadesu (*CML-4998) in a performance that is superior to the present disc. The Chausson concerto for violin, piano and string quartet is an interesting work, rather different, but pleasing and absorbing. There is less high power solo work and more combined effort in the form of chamber music, to the degree that this is hardly a concerto. The musical content is charming and well worth hearing.

Mischa Elman is a violinist who just does not appeal to this reviewer. Nothing would give more pleasure at this moment than to report that here is a performance of the great Beethoven *Concerto* that may be different but that is nevertheless good and worth hearing. Such is not the case at all. Here is a performance that is not admirable in any way whatsoever and has no reason in the world for being committed to discs. One word can adequately describe it: feeble. It is insecure at every turn and offers nothing in an over-all conception of the score. Any other recording in the LP lists is more rewarding. And exactly the same may be said of the pair of Mozart concertos, each of which has had numerous recordings that are measurably better than those provided by Elman. We just cannot see why these are offered by a major label, considering the exceptionally high level of output by this company in every field of recording. Maybe this is not our day for hearing these discs, but we will guarantee you will agree it was not Elman's day for recording them either—by about twenty years. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: (4) Early Quartets. New Music Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5003) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Quartets* Nos. 2 in D, K. 155; 3 in G, K. 156; 4 in C, K. 157; 5 in F, K. 158.

Mozart: Quartet No. 19 in C, K. 465. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 21 in D, K. 575.** Amadeus String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-32) \$4.98.

Mozart: The (4) Last Quartets. Budapest String Quartet. 2-12" discs in box (*C-SL-228) \$7.98.

CONTENTS: *Quartet* No. 20 in D, K. 499 and *Quartet* No. 21 in D, K. 575. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5007) \$3.98.

Quartet No. 22 in B-flat, K. 589 and *Quartet* No. 23 in F, K. 590. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5008) \$3.98.

The Mozart Bicentennial goes on apace, bringing us new recordings of 9 of Mozart's String Quartets (No. 21 is duplicated—10 recordings of 9 Quartets). The reproduction of the disc featuring

the New Music Quartet is sparkling and brilliant, reflecting properly the works of the 17-year-old Mozart. . . . RCA Victor's HMV disc offers somewhat darker reproduction—not less hi-fi, but more suited to the more mature works. . . . The incomparable Budapest Quartet here performs Mozart's last works for string quartet in a manner to please the most discriminating. The discs are available separately, pairing No. 20 with No. 21 and No. 22 with No. 23, as well as in a box containing all four quartets. We are bold enough to suggest that the Budapest album is worth getting in its entirety, even if you already have one or two of the quartets now in your library; it is magnificent!

Beethoven: (5) Sonatas for Violoncello and Piano.

Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Solomon (piano). Five sides, and **Beethoven: Variations on "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen" from Mozart's "Zauberflöte," Op. 66.** Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Lukas Foss (piano). 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6120) \$11.98.

CONTENTS: *Sonatas* No. 1 in F, Op. 5, No. 1; No. 2 in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2; No. 3 in A, Op. 69; No. 4 in C, Op. 102, No. 1; No. 5 in D, Op. 102, No. 2.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in G, Op. 5, No. 2.

One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in A, Op. 69.** Maurice Gendron (violoncello) and Jean Françaix (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-DTL-93036) \$4.98.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring").

One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in A, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer").** Mischa Elman (violin) and Joseph Seiger (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1258) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Trio No. 4 in D, Op. 70, No. 1

("Ghost"). One side, and **Mozart: Trio No. 4 in E, K. 542.** Trio di Trieste. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-1177) \$3.98.

Beethoven: Septet in E-flat, Op. 20.

Barylli String Ensemble and the Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18003) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18003) \$4.98.

Since Casals and Serkin (TNR Nov. '54) have already recorded a superb version of the five Beethoven Sonatas for Cello and Piano (*C-SL-201), this new set on RCA Victor records by Piatigorsky and Solomon seems unnecessary, although needless to say it is also a very fine one. Nevertheless, we doubt that the demand for these charming works will support more than these two sets; Starker and Bogin (*PE-SPL-562) suffer from inferior reproduction, and Janigro and Zecchi (*WEST-WL-5170, 5173, & 5180) will not be available when the present supply at the factory is exhausted.

The London Ducretet-Thomson disc suffers from poor reproduction and lack of sparkle in the playing . . . Mischa Elman and Joseph Seiger play the thrice familiar "Spring" and "Kreutzer" Sonatas in competent fashion; but who needs more recordings of these now? Both works are more than adequately represented in the LP catalogs . . . The Mozart-Beethoven disc on London is well done and is recommended particularly, on the basis of the coupling, for those collectors who haven't much chamber music in their libraries and wish a sampling from each composer; there are plenty of other couplings of the two works for those who wish to specialize either in Beethoven or Mozart. . . . The Westminster disc is probably the best available of the *Septet, Op. 20*, a lovely work which will delight chamber music fans.

Prokofiev: Sonata No. 1 in F minor, Op. 80. One side, and **Leclair: Sonata No. 3 in D.** And **Locatelli-Ysaye: Sonata in F minor.** David Oistrakh (violin) and Vladimir Yampolsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1987) \$3.98.

Mozart: Sonata in G, K. 379. David Oistrakh (violin) and Lev Oborin (piano). And **Mozart—arr. Kreisler: Rondo.** Igor Oistrakh (violin) and Abram Makarov (piano). One side, and **Mozart: Sonata in B-flat, K. 454.** David Oistrakh (violin) and Vladimir Yampolsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*CSM-CRLP-194) \$3.98.

Bach: Sonata No. 5 in F minor. David Oistrakh (violin) and Lev Oborin (piano). One side, and **Bach: Sonata No. 1 in G minor.** Igor Oistrakh (violin). And **Vitali: Chaconne.** Igor Oistrakh (violin) and Abram Makarov (piano). 1-12" disc (*CSM-CRLP-193) \$3.98.

Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21. David Oistrakh (violin) with the National Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. One and one-half sides, and **Paganini: Caprice No. 13 in G minor.** David Oistrakh (violin) and Vladimir Yampolsky (piano). And **Paganini: Caprice No. 17 in E-flat.** David Oistrakh (violin). And **Wagner: Albmblatt in C.** Marina Kozolupova (violin) and Irena Kozolupova (piano). And **Glière: The Bronze Horseman**—excerpt. David Oistrakh (violin) with the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra conducted by Reinhold Glière. And **Khachaturian: Gayne Suite**—Aisha Dance, Sabre Dance. Leonid Kogan (violin) and A. Mytnik (piano). 1-12" disc (*CSM-CRLP-179) \$3.98.

We wonder what this review would say if it were being written in Russia. We can only state that this decadent capitalistic system of recording certainly has the collectivist system backed off the changing map. After playing the new RCA Victor recording of Oistrakh, the others sound like tin-types of his playing. If the others are earlier examples of recording, then the jacket notes should so state, and we could place them in that hallowed

niche reserved for collectors' items. . . . which is where we will place them anyhow.

The three sonatas on the Victor disc are music making of a high order. They do display the violinist as a wizard for the sake of squeezing what is possible out of his instrument. The music is, in the case of the Leclair and Locatelli Sonatas, on the older and established classical side. The Prokofiev Sonata is a masterpiece of contemporary writing which has an exposition by Oistrakh that places the music in the truest possible light. This master violinist plays the music to a degree that elevates this Sonata in a way few others could match. There is a world of good, solid violin playing that will appeal to those who truly love the art. For those who can assimilate this music, this disc is one in a thousand.

The other three discs listed above present the Oistrakhs, David and son Igor, in an assortment of things, and introduce a couple of other Soviet fiddlers of accomplishment. Outstanding among the works played is the Lalo *Symphonie Espagnole*, which is not outstanding at all considering that same work played by the same artist is available in a superb new reproduction (*ANG-35205). Which leaves the Mozart and Bach sonatas for those who treasure Oistrakh and his interpretations above the glories of high fidelity recording. After all, you can hear what the man is doing, and that is what counts most. Just be sure to hear them first. S.

Schubert: Quartet No. 13 in A minor, Op. 29. One side, and **Brahms: Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2.** Amadeus String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-27) \$4.98.

The present String Quartet was one of the last three (along with the *D minor*, known as "Death and the Maiden," and the *G major*) works Schubert wrote in this form. Which brings forth the remark that every time we hear one of the late works of Schubert, we once again curse his untimely death; what his pen might have brought forth, had he lived! However, we must be thankful for the works he did leave us, no small item of which is the lovely *A minor Quartet*. Here is a songful work, evocative of thoughts of beauty, grace, the wonders of nature. The Amadeus Quartet is a capital organization, known in this country only by its records until a couple of years ago; the foursome obviously find this Quartet a joyous opus to play.

Although the very fine Budapest Quartet has also recorded this Schubert work (*C-ML-4831), from *C-SL-194, TNR May '54), a whole 12-inch disc is devoted to it (at \$3.98); for one dollar more you can buy the present disc, which offers a reading just as good (or nearly so, for those who place the Budapest in the Cadillac class) and, in addition, a beautiful performance of the Brahms *Quartet No. 2 in A minor*. A very good buy, and a very fine disc, most welcome to the chamber music catalog.

CHORAL



Bach: Mass in B minor. Lisa Schwarzweller (soprano), Lore Fisher (contralto), Helmut Kretschmar (tenor) and Bruno Müller (bass) with the Choir of the Dreikönigskirche (Frankfurt) and the Collegium Musicum Orchestra conducted by Kurt Thomas. 3-12" discs in box (*OL-OL-50094/6) \$14.94.

Current Market Price: \$10.47.

When George Bernard Shaw got his first job as a music critic, his editor made him promise "not to write about Bach in B minor"—the inference being, of course, not to get technical about music and its performance. Yet one wonders what the brilliant (and sarcastic) Irishman would have done or said about the 8th recorded performance of Bach's towering masterpiece? Gentle reader, this reviewer is going to "write about Bach in B minor," although in the ordinary and literal sense of the words.

First, as a refresher, one must understand what the Mass in B minor is, musically and textually. Lutheran "Masses" were frequently composed by seventeenth century musicians, but consisted only of a *Kyrie* and *Gloria*. Bach's four other Masses all conform to this reduced pattern; the Lutheran Church had no place in its services for a complete Mass and, even if it had, the size and scope of the Mass in B minor rendered it utterly unsuitable. Its length likewise precluded its liturgical use by Roman Catholic Churches. When listening to it today it is best to forget all liturgical associations and to regard it as a gigantic cantata (or, rather, a series of cantatas) on some of the oldest and most deeply cherished prayers of Christendom.

The present performance enables one to adopt very easily the ideas outlined above. There is a sturdiness about the presentation that is very reminiscent of the Cantatas—there is very little mysticism and no nonsense of any sort tolerated by Kurt Thomas. What G. B. S. terms "the stupendous march of Bach's polyphony and the intense and touching expression of his harmonies" are allowed to make their full effect. The soloists are all excellent vocalists, capable and knowing. The choir of the Dreikönigskirche is a chorus that sings with enthusiasm and reasonable precision. The orchestra, with some unnamed but virtuoso instrumentalists, does excellently throughout the long and complex score.

This B minor Mass crowds the earlier Westminster version with Dr. Hermann Scherchen at the helm. This one is a little less "towering" but a little more "human" and, insofar as one listener was concerned, such a state of affairs was to the good. There is excellent recorded sound, notes and texts. If you have always shied away from "Bach in B minor" try this recording of the Mass — you might be surprised.

W.

Mozart: Litaniae Lauretanae in D, K. 195. Jennifer Vyvyan (soprano), Nancy Evans (contralto), William Herbert (tenor) and George James (bass) with the St. Anthony Singers and the Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Anthony Lewis, with Ralph Downes (organ). 1-12" disc in box (*OL-OL-50085) \$4.98.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

Mozart: Litaniae de Venerabili Altaris Sacramento in E-flat, K. 243. Jennifer Vyvyan (soprano), Nancy Evans (contralto), William Herbert (tenor) and George James (bass) with the St. Anthony Singers and the Boyd Neel Orchestra conducted by Anthony Lewis, with Ralph Downes (organ). 1-12" disc (*OL-OL-50086) \$4.98.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

Mozart's unhappy relations with Heieronymus Colloredo, Archbishop of Salzburg, are very well known. That they exerted a depressing effect on much of his religious or liturgical music is quite likely, for when he was able to write for someone else's church, the results were startlingly different. "As soon as Mozart was able to disregard the Archbishop's desires," writes Alfred Einstein, "he returned at once to a *cantabile* and solo style."

The two *Litaniae* recorded here are among the most ravishing of Mozart's compositions. The first, *Litaniae Lauretanae in D* (Loretine litany) receives its name from the Mary chapel of the Casa Santa in Loreto, the inscriptions from which are gathered together in its text; this text is intended to serve primarily for devotions of a private nature. The work is one of surpassing beauty and closes with an *Agnus Dei* that Einstein describes as "one of the most heavenly of all his Adagio movements." It is difficult to realize that this deeply moving music is the work of an eighteen year old boy!

Two years later Mozart had another chance to ignore the Archbishop and was, therefore, free of musical restrictions. In this *Litaniae de Venerabili Altaris Sacramento in E-Flat* he stretches his wings again and writes extensive arias for the soloists and allows himself polyphonic exploits. At the same time he writes homophonic passages that are so "modern that one fancies one could encounter them in such a work as Verdi's *Requiem*." (Einstein). And here again the *Agnus Dei* is a hauntingly beautiful section that must be heard to be believed.

The soloists are all first-class singers, with Jennifer Vyvyan and William Herbert being outstanding. Anthony Lewis' direction is a model of Mozartean grace and lucid understanding of the nature of the words and music.

Hearing these beautifully recorded discs, one can readily disagree with A. E. Housman and state that it is Mozart, and not malt,

"... that does more than Milton can
To justify God's ways to man."

W.

Elgar: The Dream of Gerontius (complete). (Sung in English). Richard Lewis (tenor); Marjorie Thomas (mezzo-soprano); John Cameron (baritone); Huddersfield Choral Society directed by Herbert Bardgett; and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent, with Ernest Cooper (organ). 2-12" discs (*ANG-35285/6TP) \$6.96. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3543B) \$9.98.

This is, in all probability, a long-awaited first LP recording. Critical opinion, however, is divided as to the merits and demerits of Elgar's setting of Cardinal Newman's poem, *The Dream of Gerontius*, the reason being, as Cecil Gray points out in the course of a very instructive essay on Elgar's music, "that one's attitude towards them (i.e., the oratorios and religious pieces) must inevitably be largely conditioned by temperamental considerations." The atmosphere of *Gerontius*, in particular, demands a certain temperamental affinity in the listener before he can hope to enjoy it, and this writer must confess that he lacks this qualification entirely. With all its spirituality and undoubted sincerity, the atmosphere is "sanctimonious rather than saintly, pious rather than fervid." There is more of tract than oratorio about it.

The foregoing is not to be construed as anything more than advice to those unfamiliar with the score. For those acquainted with *The Dream of Gerontius*, it only remains to state that Sir Malcolm Sargent and Angel have combined forces in what might well be considered a definitive performance of the work. The soloists, especially tenor Richard Lewis, are truly excellent and Sir Malcolm has done his best for the score which, as his note on the recording states, means very much to him. The Huddersfield Choir sings with all the purity of tone and precision for which it is deservedly famous. The Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra also rises to the occasion and plays with genuine polish and expressiveness. Recorded sound is fine and the package, which includes the complete text, leaves nothing to be desired. W.

Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53. Monica Sinclair (contralto), Chorus of the Croydon Philharmonic Society, and the Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. And **Brahms: Tragische Ouvertüre, Op. 81.** One side, and **Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a.** And **Brahms: Akademische Festouvertüre, Op. 80.** Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*WEST-SWN-18035) \$3.98. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*WEST-WN-18035) \$4.98.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

OPERA

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 4-12" discs in box with complete score (*L-XLLA-35) \$19.92.

Susanna Hilde Gueden (s)
Countess Lisa della Casa (s)
Cherubino Suzanne Danco (s)
Figaro Cesare Siepi (bs)
Count Almaviva Alfred Poell (bt)
Dr. Bartolo Fernando Corena (bs)
Marcellina Hilde Rossel-Majdan (ms)
Don Basilio Murray Dickie (t)
Barberina Anny Felbermayer (s)
Antonio Harald Pröghl (bs)
Don Curzio Hugo Meyer-Welfing (t)

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Vittorio Gui. 4-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6401) \$15.98.

Susanna Graziella Scutti (s)
Countess Sena Jurinac (s)
Cherubino Rise Stevens (s)
Figaro Sesto Bruscantini (bs)
Count Almaviva Franco Calabrese (bs)
Dr. Bartolo Ian Wallace (bs)
Marcellina Monica Sinclair (ms)
Don Basilio Hugues Cuénod (t)
Barbarina Jeanette Sinclair (t)
Antonio Gwyn Griffiths (bs)
Don Curzio Daniel McCoshan (t)

This year's first great treat for Mozartians comes in the form of two first-rate performances of the flawless and inspired *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Both performances here have the requirements astutely defined by Brockway and Weinstock for truly Mozartean representations—here one is treated to "an opera and not a collection of songs sung by a galaxy of stars. It is a performance in which (conductor), stage director and each member of the cast are equally resolved to give due emphasis to the development of the drama—a great one be it remembered—only then can *Le Nozze di Figaro* be the complete experience it should be."

Comparison of the two sets resolves itself largely into a question of dealing in superlatives. Actually both Siepi and Bruscantini are superb Figaros; there is little if nothing, to choose from here. Lisa della Casa and Sena Jurinac are equally fine both dramatically and vocally. This writer rather preferred Graziella Scutti to Hilde Gueden, principally because of Sgra. Scutti's very expressive singing, although Frau Gueden's more mature characterization will have many admirers. Suzanne Danco's

Cherubino is more musical, more controlled than that of Rise Stevens. Finally, and here is, perhaps, the greatest difference vocally, Alfred Poell's delineation of Count Almaviva leaves Franco Calabrese's far behind. Dr. Poell's conception of the beleaguered Count is a continual source of joy, both vocally and dramatically.

Among the lesser roles, Victor's Don Basilio is superb while Fernando Corena as Dr. Bartolo is to be preferred to Ian Wallace on Mozartean grounds. London is prodigal with its talent in these minor roles—it uses the silvery-voiced Anny Felbermayer as Barberina and the very capable Hilde Rossel-Majdan as Marcellina.

The London performance is to be preferred to the Victor, however, on two and possibly three counts. First, there is the superior reproduction achieved by London's engineers. *Le Nozze di Figaro* has just about the "busiest" orchestra of any opera, and the superb Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra sounds simply marvelous! Second, the late Erich Kleiber is a sounder Mozartean than Vittorio Gui, and his tempi and generalship are more musical and more exciting. Finally, London includes the invariably omitted aria *Il capro e la capretta*, a thoroughly delightful little song that does not deserve its years of neglect. For these reasons, then, and despite the \$4 difference in price, the Viennese Figaro is to be preferred over its English rival. W.

Verdi: Aida (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Tullio Serafin. 3-12" discs (ANG-35287/9TP) \$10.44. 3-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3525C/L) \$15.98.

Aida	Maria Meneghini Callas (s)
Radames	Richard Tucker (t)
Amneris	Fedora Barbieri (ms)
Amonasro	Tito Gobbi (bt)
Ramfis	Giuseppe Modesti (bs)
Il Re	Nicola Zaccaria (bs)
Messaggero	Franco Ricciardi (t)
Sacerdotessa	Elviar Galassi (ms)

There was a somewhat unkind saying in the First World War about Marshal Foch to the effect that "he was always a few hours late and a couple of divisions short." Angel finds itself in that same position with its new recording of *Aida*, principally because RCA Victor stole the march with its phenomenal recording of the same opera (TNR Nov. '55). Such, however, are the calculated risks of the record business. We know how late he was; let us see how many divisions "the recording angel" is short.

To write disparagingly of Maria Callas approaches blasphemy in some quarters, so the writer will content himself with repeating an earlier observation that the relatively *petite* soprano is happier in lyric roles than in the heavier dramatic ones. Hear, in this connection, the high notes in *O patria mia*. Since

both RCA Victor and Angel acquired the services of the redoubtable Fedora Barbieri (as Amneris) it remains to observe that she is much more bump-tious and, consequently, less regal in the Angel set. The case of Bjoerling vs. Tucker leaves little doubt in this writer's mind—it is Bjoerling all the way. Tucker has a habit of becoming, at times, more "operatic" than an Italian tenor; the effects sometimes upset the writer no little bit. It is not fair to compare Christoff and Modesti—Victor was really spendthrift in casting the great Bulgarian basso as Ramfis. Clabassi is superior to Zaccaria as Il Re. Tito Gobbi's Amonasro, on the contrary is a superb conception dramatically and very superior vocally—better than Warren's on both counts. In fact his part in the Nile scene duet is the high spot in the opera.

Perlea shades Serafin in getting expression from his singers and RCA Victor engineers have captured better sound, although the Angel recording is very good, not to be sneered at by any means—it is just that the Victor sound verges on the spectacular.

The present set, then, while a pretty good performance, is primarily for the admirers of Callas and Tucker—as such it cannot miss. W.

Handel: Sosarme (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, St. Anthony Singers and the St. Cecilia Orchestra conducted by Anthony Lewis, with Thurston Dart (harpsichord) and Terence Weil (violinello). 3-12" discs in box (*OL-OL-50091/3) \$14.94.

Current Market Price: \$10.47.

Sosarme	Alfred Deller (c-t)
Haliarte	William Herbert (t)
Erenice	Nancy Evans (c)
Elmira	Margaret Ritchie (s)
Argone	John Kentish (t)
Melo	Helen Watts (c)
Altomaro	Ian Wallace (bs)

Handel: Semele (complete). (Sung in English). Soloists, St. Anthony Singers, and the New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Anthony Lewis, with Thurston Dart (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in box (*OL-OL-50098/100) \$14.94.

Current Market Price: \$10.47.

Jupiter	William Herbert (t)
Cadmus	George Prangnell (bs)
Athamas	John Whitworth (c-t)
Somnus	George James (bs)
Apollo	Robert Ellis (t)
Juno	Anna Pollak (c)
Iris	Brenda Griffith (s)
Semele	Jennifer Vyvyan (s)
Ino	Helen Watts (c)

Two first recordings of prime importance have

been made in England and released in this country under the Oiseau-Lyre label. Previous attempts at recording Handel's operas (although, properly speaking, *Semele* is not an opera) have been generally misguided efforts (recordings of *Rodelinda*, *Julius Caesar* and *The Faithful Shepherd* come to mind in this connection), but here one is confronted with a sincere, eminently intelligent and successful project that meets squarely and solves most of the many problems posed by the works.

Edward J. Dent, writing about Handel's operas, refers to *Sosarme* as "another unsatisfactory opera" and writes again that "musically, *Sosarme*, is very unequal" but, aside from these two statements has nothing but praise for the work! It is entirely possible that Mr. Dent never heard the opera but was judging from the score (not always the safest thing to do). Certainly he had not heard this performance when he wrote his article, for no one with any musical sensitivity, and Mr. Dent is an excellent scholar and critic, could suggest it was unsatisfactory musically. The cast is headed by Alfred Deller, the superb counter-tenor, and includes such Handel stylists as Margaret Ritchie and William Herbert, who will be favorably remembered for their excellent work in the Westminster *Messiah*. Ian Wallace and Nancy Evans are also top-flight singers who turn in musically convincing performances. The only weak spot is John Kentish, who bleats. Musical high spots are Elmira's air *Rendi il sereno al ciglio* and the duet *Per le porte del tormento* sung by Elmira and *Sosarme*, although nearly everything in the opera is on a high musical plane. All the recording's many excellences came as a complete surprise to this writer, who did not expect the antiquated *opera seria* to make anything like the impact it did.

Semele, on the other hand, is an "action-less opera"—a semi-opera, masque, secular cantata—take your choice. It is in the style of Purcell rather than in the Italianate style Handel used for his operas. This is a more popular work, by virtue of such airs as *Where'er you walk; Leave me, loathsome light; O sleep, why dost thou leave me—to mention but a few*. And yet, when it is played right after *Sosarme*, it lacked much of the drive and drama of the earlier opera. This observation may be dismissed, by those so inclined, as a purely subjective opinion; but it is, nonetheless, one honestly felt. The same cast, essentially, is as vocally splendid here as it is in the other recording. The very highest praise is due director Anthony Lewis for the excellent and stylish performances.

Texts are supplied, although the arrangement of them, while undoubtedly economical, is very awkward. Recorded sound is the best Oiseau-Lyre has yet supplied. Handeliens now have something to rejoice over and, if the simile may be mixed, to sink their teeth into. W.

Verdi: Don Carlos (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Rome Opera House Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Gabriele Santini. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6124) \$11.98.

Philip II Boris Christoff (bs)
Don Carlos Mario Filippeschi (t)
Rodrigo Tito Gobbi (bt)
Grand Inquisitor Giulio Neri (bs)
A Friar Plinio Clabassi (bs)
Elizabeth of Valois Antonietta Stella (s)
Princess Eboli Elena Nicolai (ms)

Don Carlo (or more properly, *Don Carlos* since that is the name of Schiller's play and also the way in which Verdi always referred to it in his letters) is Verdi's second opera (one should say *grand opera*). There are many great moments in the grandiose work—the first act duet, *Dio, che nell'alma infondere*; King Philip's monologue *Ella giammai m'amo* which is immediately followed by the eerie exchange between the King and the Grand Inquisitor. Princess Eboli's aria *O don fatale* is deservedly popular, and Rodrigo's death scene has many melodious and stirring passages, while Elizabeth's last act aria *Tu che le vanità* is Verdi at his greatest. Yet with all these great moments, there is something lacking—at least, insofar as this performance is concerned.

It is easy for anyone (the writer, for example) to ask—why not Bjorling instead of Filippeschi? Why not Barbieri instead of Nicolai? These two substitutions would have made the present performance of *Don Carlos* an outstanding one, for the other members of the cast are more than equal to their parts. In Christoff, Neri and Clabassi one is treated to the spectacle of three top-flight basses in one opera; Tito Gobbi is one of today's best baritones; and Antoinette Stella is a very capable and youthful dramatic soprano with a gorgeous voice. All of which makes the vocal defections of Filippeschi and Nicolai the more apparent. Mario Filippeschi rants and bellows his way through the title role in a manner that seems entirely devoid of common sense. Actually, his singing makes a caricature of the noble Don. Elena Nicolai is a very ordinary Princess Eboli. Her method of singing is too much on the bumptious side for her to sound like a satisfactory Princess—in short, her performance lacks dignity.

Gabriele Santini's direction is uniformly good—tempi are reasonable and a realistic balance between orchestra and soloists is maintained. The recorded sound is very fine, and the libretto and notes are first class.

Even so, neither of the two complete recordings of *Don Carlos* is satisfactory—the impatient listener must make his choice between the present recording or the earlier Cetra (TNR Nov. '52). It would be fine if RCA Victor would make available, from this performance, via the "Highlights" route, Chris-

toff's great singing of the Monologue, the Inquisitor's Scene with Neri and Christoff and Gobbi's Death Scene. If room were still available, Stella's fine singing of the *Tu che la vanità* would be welcome. Now there would be a record! W.

VOCAL



Falla: (7) *Canciones populares Españolas*. One side and Ravel: *Don Quinchotte à Dulcinée*. Aurelio Estanislao (baritone) accompanied by Hedy Salquin (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9180) \$2.98.

Popular Spanish Songs. Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by André Collard (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9142) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *La Granadina; Serrana; Asturiana; Paño murciano; El Amor es como un niño; Las Majas madrileñas; El Vito; Canto andaluz.*

Manuel de Falla's *Siete Canciones populares Españoles* are, apparently, popular in the truest sense of the word—this is the sixth recording of them and the second in the London catalog. The Ravel opus here achieves its second recording and also the second in the London catalog! The artist for this record is an excellent baritone, Aurelio Estanislao, who succeeds in sounding quite a lot like Gérard Souzay. Diction, feeling and recording are all first-rate and, for those who have not yet added either work to their collections, the present disc may be considered eminently satisfactory.

Miss Kolassi sings arrangements by Koeckert and Joaquin Nin of some eight "popular" songs that include lullabies, dance tunes and so forth. She has the temperament and the voice to sing this sort of music—a thing she proceeds to do with genuine enjoyment—a feeling that she successfully conveys to the listener.

London has given both discs the best in *ffrr* sound and both records may be accounted little gems—specialized, no doubt, but even for those without an Iberian cast to their musical taste, these discs should prove both enjoyable and instructive. W.

Songs of Poulenc, Debussy and Roussel. Genevieve Touraine (soprano) accompanied by Francis Poulenc (piano). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-154) \$5.95.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

CONTENTS: *Fiançailles pour Rire*, (3) *Chansons de F. Garcia Lorca* (Poulenc); (3) *Ariettes Oubliées* (Debussy); *A un Jeune Gentilhomme, Amoureux Séparés, Coeur en Péril* (Roussel).

This disc, devoted to French art songs, will find a warm welcome among lovers of the form, for they are presented in a manner that must be considered as a model for such activities.

Side one is devoted to the six songs that comprise Poulenc's cycle *Fiançailles pour Rire* ("Make-

believe Engagements"). These extremely odd poems are the work of the French poetess, Louise de Vil-morin, and were written in 1939. They are morbid and difficult of access; for example:

The setting sun reflects itself

In the gloss of my table:

'Tis the round cheese of the fable

Caught in the gilt beak of my scissors.

This is fairly straight-forward, a very ingenious conceit, but see what follows:

But where is happiness? It steals away.

I would like to sew but a magnet

Attracts all my needles to itself.

(This is poetry?)

Nevertheless, Poulenc has set this and the other poems in typically ironic fashion. Curiously, the absurdity of the texts is not so noticeable in the French language. The music is pungent, somewhat dissonant and generally matches the texts.

Debussy's *Ariettes Oubliées* are better known songs and were dedicated to Mary Garden "(an) unforgettable Mélisande—with warm and grateful thanks." Roussel's three songs offer a decided contrast to the others. Poulenc and Debussy may be considered "painter-musicians," but Roussel is a draftsman. His melodic art has "melancholy without melodrama, no over-sentimentality." The three songs of Poulenc that bring the recital to a close are fairly recent (1947) and require no explanation.

Mlle. Touraine, who is Gerard Souzay's sister, by the way, sings with ease, purity of tone and expression. There are notes and the French-English texts are supplied. The disc is well engineered. W.

ORGAN



Bach: (6) *Organ Sonatas*. Fernando Germani, playing the organ at All Souls, Langham Place, England. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LHMV-601) \$9.98.

CONTENTS: *Sonatas Nos. 1 in E-flat, 2 in C minor, 3 in D minor, 4 in E minor, 5 in C, and 6 in G.*

Of the three complete editions of the six *Trio Sonatas for Organ* now on LP, this one will probably be the easiest on the ears for most folks. Actually, this is rough going for all but students and deeply rooted devotees of Bach—regardless of what they write and say about the beauty of the music. There is, to most listeners, a monotony about these six trio sonatas, and only a seasoned musical knowledge can appreciate them. We do not, therefore, urge the majority of collectors of organ records to run out and acquire this set as a "must" for their libraries. This is esoteric fare with a limited market and can honestly be recommended only as such.

Fernando Germani performs the sonatas in a man-

ner that will be of use to those trying to master these fiendishly difficult works. His playing is neat and well balanced, and his registrations are not only good, they are also interesting and pleasing. The organ used is a pleasant one to begin with, for it has the classic tone necessary for the music; but it has a reasonable warmth and lack of squeal. It is reproduced with exceptional clarity as well as a nice resonance — an ideal combination of events which the engineers managed with wonderful effect.

Schweitzer has written of the Trio Sonatas: "Whoever has studied them thoroughly will find scarcely a single difficulty in the old or even in modern organ music that he has not met with there and learned how to overcome; and before all he will have attained that absolute precision that is the chief essential for good organ playing, since in this complicated trio-playing the slightest unevenness in touch is heard with appalling clearness." And any organist, budding, arrived, or ex, will attest to that. So to those that aspire, we can only advise: listen to Germani, and endeavor to emulate. S.

Reubke: Sonata on the 94th Psalm. One side, and **Franck: Grande Piece Symphonique, Op. 17.** Virgil Fox, playing the organ at the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1917) \$3.98.

With this disc we are treated to Virgil Fox digging into something big and worth while in the way of organ masterpieces. Each of these works represents landmarks in the mid-Romantic era of organ literature and provides interesting listening for anyone who likes good organ music.

Fox has a bit of competition on both these works. The other recording of the Franck is by Nies-Berger (*CH-CHS-1145), an estimable performance, lacking a bit of the urgency and thrust of Fox. In the Reubke there are several recordings, notably the one Biggs made on the Methuen organ (*C-ML-4820). This is one of Biggs' finest efforts, and the sound of the Methuen organ is more than a match for the one Fox has at his disposal. Devoted organ fans will not hesitate to duplicate these works, but some folks will want to choose one or the other, and as much as we admire Fox, we must admit the Biggs version, in this one instance, is preferable. This is our choice mainly because of the organ, for Fox plays the Reubke with drive and virtuosity that are hallmarks of this artist's best playing.

As much as we like Fox and the music he plays, we cannot help feeling that a better organ than the one in the John Hays Hammond Museum is desirable for recordings of this magnitude. The organ is probably a good one, but it just does not give the desired effect on discs. There is precious little resonance in the hall, and the tone has not much warmth or bloom to it as it builds in power. We would love to hear these same performances on the Riverside organ. There is also a little of the old

sizzle often heard in organ reproduction, though more rarely so these days of improved high fidelity. Oh well, that is perhaps minor carping; maybe the next Fox release will be perfection itself. This is worth hearing, and Fox's artistry may well carry you away, beyond the point of any small mechanical things, for this man can play the organ superbly. S.



HARPSICHORD

Sweelinck: Harpsichord Music. Helma Elsner (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-9270) \$4.98.

CONTENTS: *Fantasia Chromatica No. 1; Toccata No. 24; Toccata No. 23; Fantasia No. 14 ("In Echo Style"); Variations on Secular Tunes and Dances; Von der Fortuna werd' ich getrieben, No. 64. Mein junges Leben hat ein End, No. 60; Est-ce Mars, No. 58; Balletto del Granduca, No. 65.*

This seems to be the sole Sweelinck disc in the current issue of the Schwann LP catalog, and a welcome entry it is. We well recall an old Technichord (78 rpm) set of Sweelinck music that sold extremely well for an item of its type. Sweelinck (1562-1621) was a Hollander; his music was, of course, baroque. Like all baroque music, there is a certain amount of "sameness" to it; several hearings are required to appreciate the many melodies running through these ingratiating Fantasias and Toccatas, yet the music is easy to listen to.

As is becoming all too prevalent these days, no biographical material about Helma Elsner is supplied; from her picture; we see she is female; and from the sounds emanating from the record, we know her to be an accomplished harpsichordist. Vox's technicians have lavished their care in matters of reproduction, so the disc must be recommended on all counts.

Masters of Early English Keyboard Music. Thurston Dart (harpsichord, clavichord, and Snetzler bureau organ of 1760). 2-12" discs in box (*OL-OL-50075/6) \$9.96.

Current Market Price: \$6.98.

Keyboard Music of Bach and His Sons. Ruggero Gerlin (harpsichord and piano). 1-12" disc in box (*OL-OL-50097) \$4.98.

Current Market Price: \$3.49.

CONTENTS: *Fantasia-Rondo in C minor, Aria in the Italian manner in A minor (J. S. Bach); Rondo in G, Sonata in E minor (C. P. E. Bach); Fugue in D minor, Fugue in E-flat, Polonaise in F (W. F. Bach).*

The album by Thurston Dart would, if properly reviewed, take several pages. It demonstrates the impeccable artistry of Mr. Dart, and it covers a lot of ground, musically. Side one contains 11 works for organ, composed between 1325 and 1625, by Bull, Newman, Gibbons, Blitheman, White and

three anonymous composers. Side two contains 5 works for clavichord, one by Croft and 4 anonymous, and 6 pieces for harpsichord by Johnson & Hooper, Farnaby, Clarke, Blow, Roseingrave, and Augustine. Side three is devoted to William Byrd, and it contains 6 assorted galliards, pavans, and the like, all played on the harpsichord. Side four contains 8 works by Thomas Tomkins, 6 played on the harpsichord, 2 on the organ. Many of the names listed, and especially Byrd and Tomkins, are well-known to present-day collectors; it will surprise most persons, we think, to learn that, although meticulous care has been expended to insure that the works are played in as close to the original form as possible, most of the works sound pleasing to modern ears. A tremendous wealth of music here, marvelously played with crystal clear reproduction.

Ruggero Gerlin demonstrates, on the all-Bach disc, his artistry at the harpsichord (for the J. S. Bach numbers) and at the piano (for the Bach fils). Although Bach senior had played the modern pianoforte, he never mentioned the instrument in connection with any of his works; the sons did, and thus it is fitting that the particular instrumentations found on this disc are as they are. The acknowledged purpose of the disc is to indicate the transition from harpsichord to pianoforte; to most it will demonstrate that the father was far more the genius than the sons.

J.



PIANO

Harris: Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra. Johana Harris (piano) with the MGM Symphony Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. One side, and **Harris: Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight.** Nell Tangeman (mezzo-soprano) with Johana Harris (piano), Samuel Thaviu (violin) and Theo Salzman (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3210) \$3.98.

Acknowledged as one of America's top composer's and one of our greatest symphonists, Roy Harris is nevertheless represented in the LP lists with only two other works: his *Sonata for Violin and Piano* and his *Symphony No. 3*, the latter in two recordings. The present disc therefore doubles this list and presents works in another form. The *Fantasy* was composed on commission from the Hartford Symphony Orchestra and premiered in November 1954, with Johana Harris as soloist. Based on three native folk tunes, the work weaves these threads together in an increasingly tighter fabric that comes to a sonorous climax. It is a work of skill and mastery, but whether it has the melodic appeal and ability to reach the public heart will remain to be seen. We have our doubts. Johana Harris plays the work with conviction and Izler Solomon again demonstrates his compatibility with native music in a vital orchestral support. Reproduction is very good.

Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight is subtitled "A Cantata of Lamentation." It was composed almost simultaneously with the *Fantasy*. The vocal writing follows the text of the Vachel Lindsay poem of the title in such a fashion that a natural declamatory effect is produced, which is close to the patterns of rhetoric discourse but is still intensely musical. The instrumental trio is used in orchestral fashion, with rather thick writing which gives a big effect, considering the means. The recording could have placed the voice a bit further forward with a resultant clarity of the text. Nell Tangeman projects the difficult vocal part admirably and with breadth and smoothness. Her diction seems good, but it is covered by the instrumental part just a little too much. This is a rich dish for those disposed to musical Americana.

S.

Bach: Goldberg Variations. Glenn Gould (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-5060) \$3.98.

Interest in this LP disc must center on the remarkable young (22) artist who performs, a Canadian by the name of Glenn Gould, whose recital in January 1955 brought forth such a plethora of rave notices from the critics. There is no gainsaying this lad's power and artistry; his touch, taste, phrasing—everything—is perfect. The *Goldberg Variations* is a monumental work, and Gould is the first pianist we found truly satisfying in these thirty variations; we preferred them played on a harpsichord (and we commend Kirkpatrick, *HS-HSLP-3062, or the older Landowska, *V-LM-1080 to your attention), but we heartily endorse Glenn Gould's interpretation of them; if you wish a piano version, you'll find this one tough to beat.

Dances for Two Pianos. Arthur Whittimore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1926) \$3.98.

CONTENTS: *Waltz Fantasy* (Strauss — arr. Whittimore and Lowe); *Sonata for Flute and Clavier in E-flat*—*Siciliano* (Bach); *Eine kleine Ballet Suite*—*Valse d'Amour* (Reger); *Slavonic Dances Nos. 1, 6, 8, 10* (Dvořák); *Billy the Kid*—*Celebration Dance* (Copland); *Malagueña* (Lecuona); *Waltzes in E, B minor, A-flat* (from Op. 39) (Brahms); *Orfeo ed Euridice*—*Melodie* (Gluck); *Valse-nobles* (Schubert); *Gymnopedie No. 2* (Satie); *Guaracha* (Gould); *3rd Street Rhumba* (Shaw).

Whittimore and Lowe's many concert appearances and records have been very well received by the concert-going and record-buying public, and we have no doubt that the present disc will be equally so received. There is nice variety present, plus fine reproduction; and the artists leave nothing to be desired in presenting this program.

DICTION



Whitman: Leaves of Grass (excerpts). Dave Allen (reading). 1-12" disc (*POETRY PR-300) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *One's Self I Sing; I Hear America Singing; Poets to Come; Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking; Song of Myself* (excerpts); *When I Heard the Learned Astronomer; The Last Invocation; Good-bye, My Fancy; Hushed Be the Camps Today; Vigil Strange I Kept on the Field One Night; When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd.*

Eliot: Selected Poems. T. S. Eliot (reading). 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1045) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock; Portrait of a Lady; Preludes; Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service; Ash Wednesday; A Song for Simeon; Marina; Coriolan—Triumphal March; The Rock—O Light Invisible; Murder in the Cathedral—Opening Chorus; Family Reunion—A Chorus (Act II).*

Wilde: Fairy Tales. Basil Rathbone (reading). 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1044) \$5.95

CONTENTS: *The Happy Prince; The Selfish Giant; The Nightingale and the Rose.*

Byron: Selected Poems. Tyrone Power (reading). 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1042) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Don Juan* (Canto I); *She Walks in Beauty; On This Day I Complete My 36th Year; Childe Harold's Pilgrimage—Canto III, vv. 18/28, 68/75, 85/98, 113/118 and Canto IV, vv. 178/184.*

Kipling: (4) Stories. Boris Karloff (reading). 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-1038) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *The Just So Stories—How the Whale Got His Throat, How the Camel Got His Hump, How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin; The Jungle Book—Mowgli's Brothers* (abridged).

There's no doubt about it in our mind: poetry was meant to be heard—not merely read. For although the art of reading poetry to one's self may be learned, it is far more difficult (for us, at least) to appreciate the rhythm and meter of verse when we read to ourself. How much better to have it read to us aloud—particularly by such fine readers as the Messrs. Allen, Eliot, Rathbone, Power and Karloff.

Poetry and stories on records are becoming, it would seem from the number of discs available, quite popular. It is a pleasure to report that the five discs above of poems and prose by Whitman, Eliot, Byron, Wilde and Kipling are now available; that they are read by sympathetic readers with wonderfully clear voices; and that the reproduction is crisp and smooth.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Long Playing Record Guide. By Warren De Motte. (Foreword by Leopold Stokowski). 448 pp. Paper Bound. Dell Publishing Co., Inc. (New York). Price 50¢ (Postpaid, 60¢).

The Fabulous Phonograph. By Roland Gelatt. 320 pp. Illustrated. J. B. Lippincott Company (Philadelphia and New York). Price \$4.95.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Orchestral Music). By Irving Kolodin. xii + 268 + vii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Chamber & Solo Instrument Music). By Harold C. Schonberg. xi + 280 + vi pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$3.50.

The Guide to Long-Playing Records (Vocal Music). By Philip L. Miller. xvi + 381 + xxii pp. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). \$4.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (Including 1st Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bager. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CLAS—Classic Editions, CSM—Colosseum, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HMV—His Master's Voice (England), HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, T—Telefunken, UNI—Unicorn, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
 Ⓢ indicates 45 rpm.